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The Michigan Land Rush in 1836

*Edited with an Introduction by Douglas H. Gordon
and George S. May*

IN THE FALL OF 1836, JOHN MONTGOMERY GORDON, a rising young Baltimore lawyer and banker, accompanied by Clement Biddle of Philadelphia, his wife's first cousin, journeyed to Michigan, bought large amounts of government lands and laid the foundations of a fortune. From July, when he decided to make the trip, until his return to Baltimore in December, Gordon kept a careful and detailed journal. He records his thorough preparations for the journey, the events of each day, and his observations of the country, the people and their life as he traveled from Baltimore to New York, up the Hudson River to Albany, westward to Buffalo, across Lake Erie to Detroit, and through southern Michigan to St. Joseph and Ionia.

As he began his journal Gordon declared that it "will form a connected narrative of the successive steps towards the formation of an opinion, will shew to my posterity the lights I acted under, whether successfull or unsuccessfull in any Land purchases and will be a convenient mode of informing my friends of the state of that North West country should any of them wish to invest in it." In the portion of his journal which survives and is now published for the first time, Gordon achieved these objectives admirably, providing to the historian much valuable information, particularly to the student of Michigan during the height of the land rush in the middle 1830's¹

¹The manuscript copies of the journals of John M. Gordon are in the Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, to which they were presented by his great-granddaughters, Rebecca Gordon Poultney and Emily Blackford Poultney Smith. Written in Gordon's precise handwriting, the Michigan portion of the journals fills 280 pages in two volumes. A microfilm copy of this is in the Burton Historical Collection of the Detroit Public Library. Gordon returned to Baltimore on December, 3, 1836, and he noted in his diary on December 27 that his travel journal had been completed to the third. However, that portion of the journal for the period October 31-December 3 has been lost. The surviving portion is being printed in four installments in *Michigan History*. With one exception noted at the beginning, it is being published in its entirety. Gordon's punctuation and spelling, which were at times careless, have been retained throughout. The first installment which follows this introduction covers the trip from Baltimore to Buffalo. The remaining installments, to be published in successive issues

Travel accounts, always a popular item with the reading public, have since the earliest times also been a favorite source of material for historians. This has been especially true in writing histories of regions on the frontiers of civilization where the scarcity of other sources often compels the use of the occasional reports of travelers, though these may be superficial or even unreliable. Such is still the case in Michigan in the latter part of the territorial period, although newspapers, government records, private papers, and pioneer reminiscences are available to the researcher in greater abundance than for the earlier periods. However, the frequent references to such travel narratives as those of Thomas L. McKenney, Charles Fenno Hoffman, and Harriet Martineau² indicate how much historians continue to rely upon intelligent, sharp-eyed visitors of the late 1820's and 1830's for information about Michigan and its people during those years.

Both by his training and his special interests John Montgomery Gordon qualifies as a traveler whose observations should command respect.³ Born at "Kenmore" in Fredericksburg, Virginia, on February 4, 1810, he was one of nine children⁴ of Samuel Gordon and Susannah Fitzhugh Knox Gordon. From childhood, when he browsed through the well-stocked family library, Gordon acquired a love of books which he retained throughout his life and which is evidenced by the many literary quotations and references found in his Michigan journal. At the same time reminiscences of outdoor activities along the Rappahannock River indicate that young Gordon's physical development had not been slighted, a fact which is also demonstrated by his ability to withstand the hardships of the long and arduous western trip.

of the magazine, will cover the journey from Buffalo to Detroit, from Detroit to St. Joseph, and from St. Joseph to Ionia, where the journal ends.

²Thomas L. McKenney, *Sketches of a Tour to the Lakes* (Baltimore, 1827); [Charles Fenno Hoffman], *A Winter in the West, by a New-Yorker*, 2 vols. (New York, 1835); and Harriet Martineau, *Society in America*, 3 vols. (London, 1837).

³The biographical material that follows is based on family records, principally Gordon's diary for the years 1835-42, and 1866-68, which are in the Maryland Historical Society. See Douglas H. Gordon, ed., "A Virginian and his Baltimore Diary," in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 49:196-204 (September, 1954).

⁴A tenth child died in infancy.

Entering Yale at the age of sixteen, Gordon in the following four years made hosts of friends, was elected to the Phi Beta Kappa Society, and received his A. B. in 1830. The next academic year he studied at the Harvard law school for a short time and then continued his law studies until he was admitted to the bar by the Supreme Bench of Baltimore City in 1834.

On November 21, 1833, Gordon married Miss Emily Chapman of Philadelphia, whom he had first met three years before at Niagara Falls. His wife's father was Dr. Nathaniel Chapman, a Virginian by birth, who was not only Philadelphia's most eminent doctor, but was also known far beyond the bounds of that city. He was at the organization of the American Medical Association, and was elected by acclamation its first president. Yet he was proudest, as a Virginian, of being chosen president of the American Philosophical Society, an office once held by Thomas Jefferson. Through her mother, *née* Rebecca Cornell Biddle, Gordon's wife was related to Nicholas Biddle, powerful head of the Bank of the United States, and to other members of the influential Biddle family. These family connections, together with his college friendships, were to be of great advantage to Gordon on his western trip in 1836, as they were throughout his life.

The young couple settled in Baltimore and began what Gordon was shortly to refer to as "the sunniest part of my existence." On August 2, 1834, Chapman, the Gordons' first child, was born, and he soon became the idol of his maternal grandparents. "My dear, dear little boy," Mrs. Chapman called him while sending him "kisses from Grand Pa and Grand Ma." In August, 1836, when Gordon was in the midst of preparations for his trip, a second son, John, was born, but died the following day. A daughter, Susan, was born early in 1838, followed by Emily in 1840 and Rebecca in 1842.

In his adopted city of Baltimore, Gordon soon became a prominent and respected member of the community. He was first mentioned in the city directory for 1835-36 as a lawyer, but by this time he had also been elected a director of the Union Bank of Maryland, probably because of bank stock owned by his father and uncle. In 1835 he became acting cashier, and eventually, in 1841, president, a position he held for many years during which the bank became the second largest in the city.

An indication of his high standing is shown by his election to the Monday Club, a small intellectual group composed of some of Baltimore's most influential men, most of them considerably older than Gordon.⁶ The diary which he began to keep in 1835 includes many references to a busy social life. The Gordons were constantly entertaining their Virginia and Philadelphia relatives, Gordon's college friends, and many others, and as frequently attending parties and social gatherings in Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Fredericksburg. With all this activity Gordon still found time for hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreation which he enjoyed and also for his reading, both of the classics and current books. In fact, Gordon, who took with him on his trip to Michigan several volumes of his favorite English authors, once expressed the fear that his "preference for works of taste and belle lettres 'might be' becoming a little too strong for the advancement of law and the sciences."

Although such a fear was unfounded, it showed Gordon's anxiety about his business affairs. It was this anxiety which led him to make his trip to Michigan in 1836. Although he and his family were assured of a comfortable living from the income from the 101 shares in the Bank of Virginia and the 120 shares in the Farmers' Bank of Virginia which had been a wedding present from his father, Gordon wrote in his Michigan journal, just a year before the panic of 1837, that he was "becoming timid on the subject of all banks" and that he had "an obligation" to his children to make some safer investments of his funds. Therefore, he sold at least part of his Virginia bank stock to obtain some of the capital he needed for the purchase of western lands.

Gordon's travel journal contains in abundance the usual comments and observations that are associated with such narratives. There are the complaints about accommodations, ranging from New York City's fashionable Astor House, which Gordon compared with a stable, to tiny inns in Michigan where he once slept "in an open garret under a crack and awoke with a stiff neck." Traveling by virtually every known means of conveyance, including stagecoach, railroad train, river boat, canal packet, steamship, and horseback, Gordon was particularly impressed by the New York omnibuses and

⁶See William D. Hoyt, Jr., "The Monday Club," in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 49:301-13 (December, 1954).

by their passengers, who were already developing the disagreeable techniques so familiar to bus and subway riders of a later era. He went from Schenectady to Utica on a new railroad and was properly impressed at being "whirled" along at a speed of twenty miles an hour, "as observed by the watch."

Until he reached Buffalo, most of the territory Gordon traversed was familiar to him from previous trips. He amused himself by writing at length about such things as the beauty of a revenue cutter and a fight between an eagle and a hawk, his remarks reflecting the strong influence of Sir Walter Scott's novels upon that romantic age. Outstanding in this part of the journal is his enjoyment of a visit to his old college acquaintance, James S. Wadsworth, in western New York. Indeed, Gordon found that the charms of the Wadsworth estate, where he had stayed on his trip to Niagara Falls in 1830, "almost steal me from the sweet memory of my own home."

As Gordon proceeded from Buffalo to Detroit in the lake steamer Michigan, the pleasures of the trip were marred by seasickness and then by unfavorable weather which delayed the ship's arrival at Detroit. Gordon found much that was worthy of recording, from his observations of all classes of the people of Detroit, where he stayed for several days before setting forth across southern Michigan. On his way on horseback to St. Joseph, via the Territorial Road, and then northward to Grand Rapids and Ionia, he had many interesting experiences. The most unusual of these took place at Grand Rapids where he was present when some of the Michigan Indians received the payments due them under the terms of the Treaty of Washington signed the previous spring. Gordon's report of this event, and especially his descriptions of some of the Indian chiefs, makes this one of the most outstanding parts of the entire journal.

However, the most valuable feature of the journal as a whole is the light that it sheds upon the sale of lands during the great "Michigan Fever," and especially the role of the land speculator. Although Gordon was somewhat uneasy about being called by the latter term, it was essentially as such that he came to Michigan. His purpose was to purchase public lands at \$1.25 an acre which he hoped to sell advantageously soon afterwards. Although he apparently gave some casual consideration to the idea of establishing in Michigan a landed estate such as the Wadsworths had created in

New York, he never seriously intended to settle on any of the land that he bought.

Actually, as Gordon's journal amply proves, he was simply one of an army of individuals who descended upon Michigan in the middle 1830's convinced that public lands were a lucrative investment. In an age before the widespread sale of stocks, unimproved lands and town lots were "the chief items of speculation in the United States."⁶ The rush for western lands at this time was so great that it has probably never been equalled in American history. Although the boom was nationwide, with the value of real estate in the country increasing by 150 per cent between 1830 and 1836, sales were by far the greatest in the west.⁷ By 1835 the principal attention of those who had been seized by the land mania was being focused on Michigan.

Sales of public lands here, which had totalled only 37,865 acres when the Detroit land office was opened in 1818, had reached a peak of 134,946 acres in 1825 and then had fallen off until 1830 when sales of 147,062 acres were a faint forecast of what was to come. By 1834 sales were up to 498,423 acres; in 1835 they reached 1,817,248, and in 1836 the astounding figure of 4,189,823 acres was recorded. This exceeded the sales in any other state or territory during 1836 and constituted one-fifth of the national total of public-land sales in that record-setting year.⁸ Although new land offices were established at Flint and Ionia during 1836, in addition to the existing offices at Detroit, Monroe, and Kalamazoo, it was impossible for officials to keep abreast of sales.

How much of the tremendous increase in sales was due to the

⁶Paul Wallace Gates, "Land Policy and Tenancy in the Prairie Counties of Indiana," in *Indiana Magazine of History*, 35: 3 (March, 1939).

⁷Roy M. Robbins, *Our Landed Heritage: The Public Domain, 1776-1936*, 59-60 (Princeton, 1942). Chapter 4 of this work summarizes the speculation of the 1830's. See also Benjamin Horace Hibbard, *A History of the Public Land Policies*, 209-27 (New York, 1924); and, for the picture in the Northwest, R. Carlyle Buley, *The Old Northwest: Pioneer Period, 1815-1840*, 2:147-59 (Indianapolis, 1950).

⁸In no year between 1800 and 1842, at least, did the land sales of any state or territory come close to equaling the record set in Michigan in 1836. "Report from the Secretary of the Treasury, Communicating, In Compliance with two resolutions of the Senate, statements of the quantity, surveys, acquisitions, sales and reservations of the Public Lands, March 2, 1843," in *Senate Document* 246, pages 5-10 (27 Congress, 3 session) (Washington, 1843).

wholesale purchases of speculators has never been estimated to any exact degree for Michigan. Certainly, the prevailing belief of contemporaries was that a very large percentage of the land went to speculators and not to actual settlers. Much evidence exists to support this contention.⁹ In an effort to curb such speculation and the inflation which accompanied it, President Andrew Jackson ordered the issuance on July 11, 1836, of the Specie Circular, decreeing that after August 15, with a few minor exceptions, only gold and silver would be accepted by the government in payment for public lands.

Although this action, which came just four days before Gordon decided to travel west, contributed to the drastic reduction in sales volume in 1837, the effects were not felt for several months. Gordon took with him only a few hundred dollars in cash. Unfortunately his journal ends before he had actually purchased any lands. Thus we do not know how he converted his \$8,000 in treasury receipts, his letter of credit, and his other funds into specie, a question which he discussed with officials at Detroit and Kalamazoo.

The loss of Gordon's journal for the period from October 31 to December 3, when he returned to Baltimore, deprives us of his report of the lands he bought and the details of his return trip. But in the portion that remains he records his observations concerning the quality of the soil, the availability of water, the timber supply, the transportation facilities that existed or might be built in a few years, and other factors that might influence the future value of the land. He sought to place himself in the "column of emigration" and thus select lands that would be in the greatest demand when the choice public lands had been taken up. Everywhere he asked what lands were selling for and what was considered to be a fair return on an investment, and he carefully wrote down as much as he could

⁹Very little work has been done in the area of Michigan land history. With regard to the question of land speculation in Michigan during the 1830's, one student has declared, "There was undoubtedly a large element of speculation in these purchases even before 1835." George Newman Fuller, *Economic and Social Beginnings of Michigan: A study of the Settlement of the Lower Peninsula during the Territorial Period, 1805-1837*, 66 (Lansing, 1916). This pioneering study contains numerous references to speculative activities in Michigan, as does Buley in *The Old Northwest*. For the reminiscences of one of the leading speculators, see Kate Ball Powers, Flora Ball Hopkins, and Lucy Ball, comps., *Autobiography of John Ball*, 133-49 (Grand Rapids, 1925).

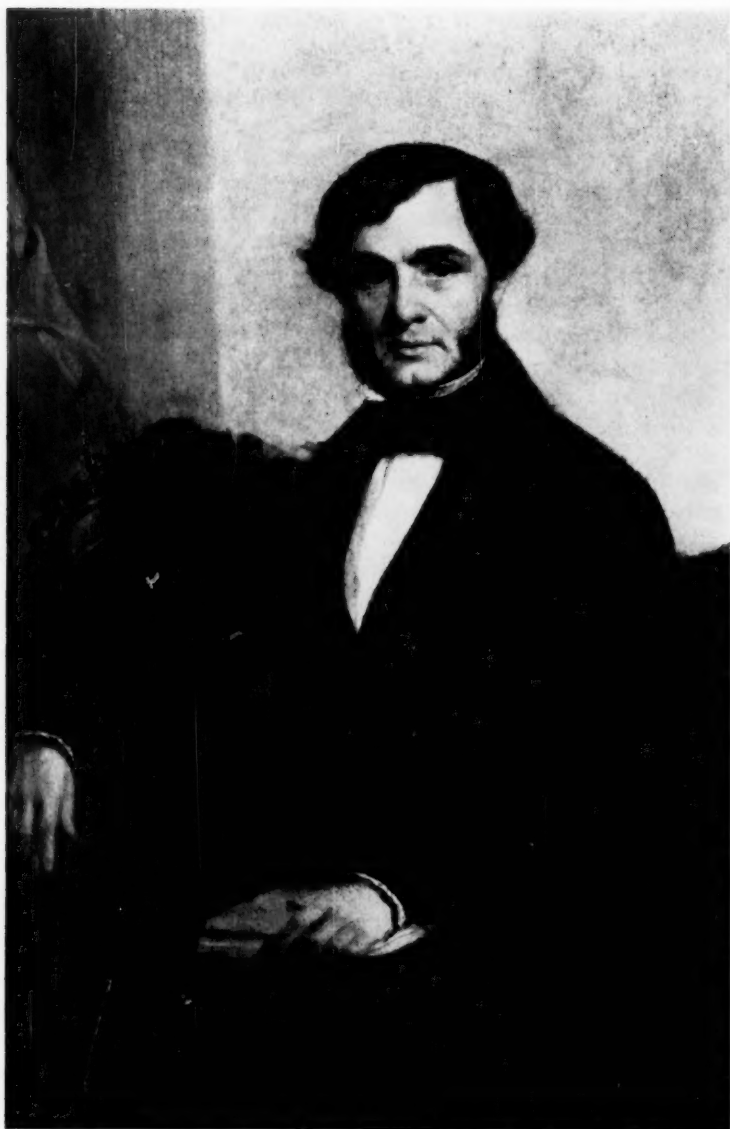
recall at the end of each day's journey. "Every one," he reported as he approached Kalamazoo, "with whom I converse, talks of 100 pr. ct. as the lowest return on an investment, no one is known ever to have lost any thing by a purchase and sale of real estate, nor are any sales of land made at second hand under \$2.50 cts. per acre." With such assurances as these, he purchased several thousand acres of public land before returning home.¹⁰

For a number of years after John M. Gordon's return, the Gordon family continued to prosper. In 1841 Gordon was elected president of the Fredericktown, Boonsborough and Cumberland Turnpike Road companies. He fulfilled a long-standing ambition for a country home by purchasing the John McKim, Jr. home, "Darley Hall," which he called "Kenmuir," in memory of his boyhood home in Fredericksburg.

But shortly dark clouds descended upon the happy family. In 1844 four-year-old Emily died, and two years later the oldest Gordon child, Chapman, also died. In 1847 the Gordons sold their country home and moved back into the city. Five years later, Emily Chapman Gordon, having outlived three of her five children, died at the age of 41. Left with two daughters, Susan, 14, and Rebecca, not quite 10, John M. Gordon continued as president of the Union Bank of Maryland. In 1857, upon the founding of the Peabody Institute, he was the first on the list of trustees named by George Peabody, and at the organization meeting he was elected first treasurer of the institute.

In 1858 Susan Gordon died at the age of 20. Her delightful maturity and affectionate nature had given support to her father in

¹⁰According to Paul Wallace Gates, who examined the entry books of the General Land Office, Gordon entered a total of 6,764 acres in Michigan in 1836. Paul Wallace Gates, "Southern Investments in Northern Lands before the Civil War," in the *Journal of Southern History*, 5:159 (May, 1939). Other records indicate that he purchased 6,023 acres in Van Buren and Berrien counties alone. See the Tract Books for Van Buren and Berrien counties in the tax division of the auditor general's office, Lansing. These books contain the record of the first purchase of land from the United States government as copied from the original land office records. These books have been microfilmed by the Daughters of the American Colonists, State of Michigan, and the films deposited in the Michigan State Library, Lansing. According to Gates individual holdings of 5,000 to 10,000 acres were common during this period and land holdings of as much as 50,000 to 100,000 "were not unknown." Gates, "Land Policy and Tenancy in the Prairie Counties of Indiana," 3.



Courtesy of Rebecca Gordon Poultney

JOHN MONTGOMERY GORDON

his numerous bereavements. Upon her death he lost all interest in his many business activities, sold his home in 1860, declined to run for re-election as treasurer of the Peabody Institute and left Baltimore. He traveled in Europe, sought recovery from his "melancholia" in South Carolina, then lived for some years in Lynchburg and for a time in Norfolk, Virginia. He diverted himself with genealogy. But his real consolation was in his books.

During these troubled years in Gordon's life, his only surviving child, Rebecca, lived with her father's sister, Susan Fitzhugh Gordon, in Baltimore. After the Civil War, in 1867, Rebecca married Major Eugene Blackford, C. S. A., of Lynchburg. When she settled in that city her father lived with her for some years and began to show some interest in life once again. Upon the birth of the Blackford's first child in 1868 Gordon gave Major Blackford \$5,000. About the same time he brought his long diary to an end on the strong note of a lengthy list of new books to be bought.

Not long afterwards Major Blackford built a home near Baltimore, naming it "Cleve." In its large library Gordon spent most of the rest of his life, reliving with the three grandchildren the happy period of his own early married life. On November 5, 1874, he resigned as a trustee of the Peabody Institute, thereby bringing to an end the last of his once numerous activities. He died at Cleve on March 11, 1884.

MICHIGAN JOURNAL, 1836

John M. Gordon

Balt. July 15th 1836.¹¹ A conversation which I held with Mr: M.¹² of this place a few days since, on the Boat in going up to Pha:¹³ on the subject of Michigan and the great opportunities there presented for making a fortune by investments in Public Lands, has induced me to entertain the idea of making a tour through that State this fall, for the purposes of observation & speculation. As I shall keep a journal, and have as yet not much particular information about that country, I shall begin to make a collection of the statistics of the state, to prepare myself for the most profitable observation and shall add to it all that I see & learn from my own personal inspection. This will form a connected narrative of the successive steps towards the formation of an opinion, will shew to my posterity the lights I acted under, whether successfull or unsuccessfull in any Land purchases and will be a convenient mode of informing my friends of the state of that North West country should any of them wish to invest in it. Mr: M. has a connexion in Detroit who has given him such accounts of the return annually on money that he is himself keen for the tour. S. N.¹⁴ & B.¹⁵ of this place have already gone & the latter has realized some \$10.000 from a small investment made last year.

I begin my notes on Mich. with extracts from a small volume entitled "Historical & Scientific Sketches of Mich." being a series of

¹¹In Gordon's journal his notations as to the place and date of each entry appear in the margin, but in the present printing of the journal they will appear in the body of the text. Other marginal notes, which Gordon made primarily as finding aids to passages he considered of special importance, will be inserted in footnotes at the appropriate place.

¹²Probably Jonathan Meredith (1784-1872), a distinguished lawyer who was born in Philadelphia but lived most of his life in Baltimore. He was a fellow member, with Gordon, of the Monday Club. Hoyt, Jr., "The Monday Club," in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 49:313.

¹³Abbreviation for Philadelphia.

¹⁴John Spear Nicholas (1802-1887), a Baltimore lawyer whose family came from Virginia. He was also a member of the Monday Club. Hoyt, Jr., "The Monday Club," 313.

¹⁵Dr. Lennox Birkhead (1794-1865), physician and member of a prominent Baltimore family. Both he and John Spear Nicholas had discussed Michigan with Gordon on July 14, 1836.

Orations delivered before the Historical Society of Mich. Published in 1834 at Detroit.¹⁶ These Discourses have been suspended for two years. The Judicial History is not touched & the administration of Cass¹⁷ remains unnoticed. The former would present a view of the junction in the same body of judicial & legislative power. The History of Cass administration is the History of the¹⁸ Territory from a state of feebleness to one of the highest vigor. . . .¹⁹

Extracts from letters & verbal communications from various person[s] acquainted with Michigan.

(Mr. L.)²⁰

The Govr. price of lands \$1..25¢ per acre was fixed many years since before the lands were enhanced by emigration and was intended not as a consideration but as an inducement to settle them. They are worth more to day than yesterday and will readily command one hundred percent advance as soon as they are taken up.

¹⁶*Historical and Scientific Sketches of Michigan; Comprising a Series of Discourses Delivered Before the Historical Society of Michigan, and Other Interesting Papers Relative to the Territory* (Detroit, 1834). Contained in this volume are four papers given before the society between 1829 and 1832 by Lewis Cass, Henry R. Schoolcraft, Henry Whiting, and John Biddle, plus two other papers by Schoolcraft and Whiting which had been presented elsewhere.

¹⁷Lewis Cass (1782-1866), governor of Michigan from 1813 to 1831, and subsequently United States Senator, cabinet officer, and diplomat. See Frank B. Woodford, *Lewis Cass, the Last Jeffersonian* (New Brunswick, N. J., 1950).

¹⁸Here Gordon first wrote "state," but then crossed it out and wrote "territory," which was the term used in the introduction to the *Historical and Scientific Sketches of Michigan*. Until January, 1837, Michigan was not officially a state in the union, but elsewhere in his journal Gordon followed the practice of Michiganians in 1836 of referring to the state, rather than the territory of Michigan. For a discussion of the legal questions involved in determining when Michigan actually became a state, see Clark F. Norton, "Michigan Statehood: 1835, 1836, or 1837," in *Michigan History*, 36:321-50 (December, 1952).

¹⁹These last four sentences are paraphrases from the introduction to the *Historical and Scientific Sketches of Michigan*. The sixteen pages of the journal that follow have been omitted since they are composed entirely of extracts from the *Historical and Scientific Sketches* and contain nothing that is original with Gordon. He devotes four and a half pages to summarizing Cass' lecture on the French and British periods of Michigan's history, about two pages to Whiting's lecture on the American period through the War of 1812, and five pages to Biddle's relatively brief paper on the public lands and other resources of Michigan. Gordon made no notes on Schoolcraft's talk on Indians, but he did digest Schoolcraft's remarks on the natural history of Michigan and Whiting's paper on the tides of the Great Lakes.

²⁰This may be the same person as L ——— of Monroe, with whom Gordon talked shortly after entering this extract in his journal. See footnote 32 below.

For tracts taken up last fall from \$10 to \$20 have been offered and refused. Perhaps by the end of the year no choice land will be left in Mich. such is the tide of emigration.

Illinois embraces a fine body of land, but not one third of it is timbered and it cannot therefore for many years become thickly peopled. Mich has a good proportion of timber, great commercial facilities and is settling rapidly. Lands at Govrt. prices have an intrinsic value and are safer than city Lot speculations. At the Rapids of Grand River an 80 acre lot which cost \$100 has been sold for \$40,000.²¹

The public Lands are surveyed in Townships of 6 miles square which are divided into sections of 1 mile square and these again into 1/2, 1/4, 1/8, & 1/16 ths. The smallest subdivision can alone be taken by a settler. The title vests immediately in the purchaser, under a patent signed by the President. The certificate of purchase is held until the patent issues, which is as soon as the great business of the Land office permits (they are now 3 years in arrear) and the entries in the land office being systematically made, should the certificate be lost the title is not affected.

15 pr. ct. is the usual compensation to a skillfull agent for taking up lands.

That part of Hillsdale County which falls within the new boundary line of Ohio will not be taxed for 5 years by her constitution. Lands near the Maumee and Erie Canal are valuable. There is a Rail Road from the former to the south bend of Lake Michigan and at certain points on the Maumee Land is held to \$200 per foot.²² Such is the crowd of purchasers that you cannot obtain access to the

²¹Other accounts indicate that lots in Grand Rapids in 1836 sold for as much as \$50 per foot frontage, or \$2,500 for a fifty-foot lot. Between 1836 and 1839 Lucius Lyon and Charles Hobart Carroll sold 145 lots for a total of \$106,156.89. See Fuller, *Economic and Social Beginnings of Michigan*, 424-28; *Autobiography of John Ball*, 139; and Lucius Lyon to Isaac E. Crary, January 14, 1841, in "Letters of Lucius Lyon," in the *Michigan Historical Collections*, 27:543 (Lansing, 1897).

²²This information was not entirely accurate. The Maumee and Erie Canal, part of the elaborate Wabash and Erie Canal system, was to have its outlet on Lake Erie at Toledo, which was a reason for Ohio wishing to secure possession of the disputed Toledo Strip from Michigan. However, the canal had not been completed in 1836, as L. would seem to imply, and it would be many years before there was a railroad "to the south bend of Lake Michigan." It was the anticipation of the future completion of these projects which created a tremendous demand for lands along the Maumee.

plats in the land office and are often kept wait[ing] for a week or 20 days and then perhaps find the land you are applying for already taken up. 500.000 acres were taken at the Bronson Land office in May 1836, and many persons in dispair of obtaining land bought at second hand.²³ In the Maumee district there is hardly any land remaining untaken. Govrn: Cass thinks that the neighbourhood of Sagana is the probable site of the future Capital; though geographically nearly central it is too near the northern verge of population & improvement. The country above 50 miles north of a line drawn E & W of Sagana will never be settled or improved. Such is the opinion of the surveyors.

(J. B. of D.²⁴ Janr: 29, 1836.) There is a large body of public Land now for sale in Mich. say 8.000.000 acres. In some districts they are much culled, in others nearly untouched. They embrace every variety of situation. The country is generally healthy except diseases common to first settlements. The emigrants are chiefly from the western part of New York & they think the climate of Michigan somewhat milder. The alluvial lands on the rivers are not extensive. The sales have greatly increased for a few years past. In 1835 they were 2½ millions of dollars equal to all the previous sales in the state, none of which before were to speculators, but to actual settlers.²⁵ The result of these speculations it is difficult to foresee. If the emigration shall continue to be as great for a few years the Govrt. land will have all been exhausted and the price advanced. But the spirit of emigration operates very unequally and it may be diverted to the fertile regions west of Lake Michigan. The State of Michigan offers as fair an opportunity for investment in Public Lands as any part of the U. S. but a purchase without personal examination would be unsafe.

Aug. 31st 1836[.] Had a long conversation with S. N.²⁶ about Michigan whence he has just returned, after having made considerable investments in Lands. He bought, at second hand, a tract near the four Lakes in Wisconsin which is central to the territory

²³Entries at Bronson, May 1836. (marginal note by J. M. G.)

²⁴Probably John Biddle, register of the Detroit Land Office.

²⁵Sales to settlers (marginal note by J. M. G.) J. B. is certainly exaggerating when he says none of the sales before 1835 were to speculators.

²⁶John Spear Nicholas.

and near the military road from Lake Mich. to the Miss.²⁷ He thinks highly of pine Lands, especially those about Sagana Bay as from their scarcity, plank will be immensely valuable. But the timber may be burnt off & the land unless good be rendered worthless.²⁸ The counties of Kent, Ionia and Clinton are as good locations for farming lands as any. On the whole he thinks a judicious investment good for a 1000 per cent advance in 5 years.

The act Cong: of April 1836²⁹ bounds Wisconsin on the E by a line through the middle of Lake Mich. to a point opposite the main channel of Green Bay and through it to the mouth of the Menominee river,³⁰ thence through the main channel of said river to its head nearest Lake desert, thence to the middle of said Lake, thence up the middle channel of Montreal river to its mouth, thence across Lake Superior to where the Boundary line of the U. S. touches the Lake on the N. W. thence on north with said boundary line to White Earth River; on the W. by a line from said boundary down the main channel of the White Earth to the Missouri and down its middle to a point due E to N. W. corner of the State of Missouri thence with the boundaries of Missouri and Illinois. The Govrnr. is appointed for 3 years and superintends Indian concerns. The property of residents & non-residents is to be taxed alike.³¹—

²⁷The Four Lake Country of Wisconsin is that in which Madison is located. The Indian names for the four lakes having been lost, the early white settlers called them simply First, Second, Third, and Fourth. The survey of the area was completed in 1834 and the first land entries made in 1835. A leading investor in the lands of the area was Governor Stevens T. Mason of Michigan. The military road referred to by Gordon connected Fort Howard at Green Bay with Fort Winnebago in central Wisconsin and Fort Crawford at Prairie du Chien. It was begun in 1835 and completed about two years later. See James Davie Butler, "Taychopherah, the Four Lake Country," in *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, 10:64-89 (Madison, 1909); and H. E. Cole, "The Old Military Road," in *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 9:47-62 (September, 1925).

²⁸The Saginaw Valley lumbering industry, which was to achieve preeminence in its field in the post-Civil War years, was scarcely in its infancy in 1836. However, the first steam sawmill in the valley had been built at Saginaw in 1834, and in 1836 a second sawmill was built on the other side of the river. George N. Fuller, ed., *Michigan, A Centennial History of the State and Its People*, 1:513 (Chicago, 1939).

²⁹The organic act creating Wisconsin Territory was approved on April 20, 1836, and went into effect on July 3, 1836. For terms of the act see Richard Peters, ed., *Public Statutes at Large of the United States of America*, 5:10-16 (Boston, 1846).

³⁰Bounds of Wisconsin (marginal note by J. M. G.)

³¹Property on [sic] Non Residents (marginal note by J. M. G.)

I saw and conversed this morning with L—— of Monroe, a land agent and former officer in the Land office of that district.³² He informs me that the counties of Kent, Ionia and Clinton are to be brought into market this fall, that they contain some of the finest land in the state, well timbered and watered. The Grand River which flows through them has been navigated by batteaux with flour from Jacksonvill in Jackson Co: The country south of that river is thickly settled and travelling on horseback very delightfull in the month of Octr: and entirely secure. The Lands have been culled in the rest of the state. He thinks that a fortune may be made by investments here. The river is a great advantage both for navigation & water power. The falls are caused by a transverse strata of limestone. For the distance of 60 miles above these counties the land, in a strip, on the Lake is said to be very fine, and beyond this point, of inferior quality. But having been hitherto penetrated by the Indians only and but partially explored, very little authentic information concerning it has been obtained.

I have provided myself with Forces Callender for 1836, Peck's new guide for Emigrants and Lieut. Lea's notes on Wisconsin & the Iowa district, besides several maps viz. Mitchells Travellers guide throughout the U. S., Tanners Map of Illinois and Missouri, & Farmers Map of Michigan.³³ The works above mentioned, I have

³²Probably Charles J. Lanman (1795-1870), who was appointed receiver of the Monroe Land Office in 1823 and held this office for eight years. Lanman was also one of the commissioners who located the county seats of Kent, Ionia, and Clinton counties. In 1835 he returned to his native Connecticut where he resided the rest of his life. He made trips back to Michigan to purchase lands, and in November, 1836, the same month in which Gordon made his purchases, he entered several hundred acres in Berrien County at the Kalamazoo Land Office. Talcott E. Wing, *History of Monroe County, Michigan*, 321 (New York, 1890); and Tract Books for Van Buren and Berrien counties.

³³The works referred to probably are: Peter Force, *The National Calendar, and Annals of the United States for 1836* (Washington, 1836); John Mason Peck, *A New Guide for Emigrants to the West, Containing Sketches of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, and Michigan, with the Territories of Wisconsin and Arkansas, and the Adjacent Parts* (Boston, 1836); Albert M. Lea, *Notes on Wisconsin Territory, with a Map* (Philadelphia, 1836); Samuel A. Mitchell, *Mitchell's Traveller's Guide Through the United States* (Philadelphia, 1836); Henry S. Tanner, *Map of Illinois and Missouri* (Philadelphia, 1829); and John Farmer, *An Improved Edition of a Map of the Surveyed Part of the Territory of Michigan* (Detroit, 1835). Because of the numerous editions that several of these items went through, it is difficult, particularly with respect to Tanner and Farmer, to determine which editions Gordon used.

read very attentively but as they come up in a view of Michg: only by comparison, I shall make no notes from them until I have seen Michg. and studied its advantages over the neighbouring states, with which I am already deeply impressed.

It is my intention, if I have time, to cross Lake Michigan and explore the Territory of Wisconsin as far as the Miss., and up it, to Prarie du Chien, returning by the Ohio to Pittsburg. I shall commence my journey in Sep: and go via N. York, Albany, Mr. Wadsworth's of Geneseo,³⁴ Buffalo & Lake Erie to Detroit, thence on horseback throughout the State, visiting the Sagana, Grand River, & Kalamazo Land offices and exploring each of those districts as far as I am able to do: I shall take out \$8000 in Treasury certificates and deposit as much more in the hands of Thos: Biddle and Co:³⁵ as the basis of a letter of credit. These funds I shall, and have, in part, already raised by a sale of Va: bank stock which though a good investment must be much inferior to a judicious one in public Lands selected by myself after a personal examination of them. I am becoming timid on the subject of all banks and think myself under an obligation to my children to throw my property into some safe investment until the explosion in the currency takes place even though in the interval, the interest cease or be merged in the principal.

Clement Biddle³⁶ accompanies me. I shall go to Washington to get my receipts in sums of \$200 each, which are small enough for every convenient purpose.

³⁴James Wadsworth (1768-1844), with his elder brother, William, came to western New York from Connecticut in 1790 and began to build the great Wadsworth estate in the Genesee Country. By the 1830's it was probably the best known farming establishment in the United States. Equally famous was Wadsworth's warm hospitality, which made Harriet Martineau doubly sorry that she could not visit "the celebrated farm of Mr. Wadsworth." Henry Greenleaf Pearson, *James S. Wadsworth of Geneseo, Brevet Major-General of United States Volunteers*, 8-27 (New York, 1913); Neil Adams McNall, *An Agricultural History of the Genesee Valley, 1790-1860* (Philadelphia, 1952); and Martineau, *Society in America*, 2:54.

³⁵Philadelphia brokers from 1799 to 1953. Thomas Biddle (1776-1857), founder of the company, was a cousin of Nicholas Biddle, the president of the Bank of the United States, and a brother of Mrs. Nathaniel Chapman, mother of Mrs. John M. Gordon. For genealogical information about this branch of the Biddle family, see Walter Livingston Cochran Biddle, "Colonel Clement Biddle," in William F. Boogher, *Miscellaneous Americana; A Collection of History, Biography and Genealogy*, 101-16 (Philadelphia, 1883-95).

³⁶Clement Biddle (1810-1879), was the eldest son of Thomas Biddle and therefore a cousin of Gordon's wife. Unfortunately, little is known about his life, other than that he did not marry. Biddle, "Colonel Clement Biddle," 104.

Pha: Sep: 16[.] We shall leave on Monday next the 19th: We have a gross of letters to Mich. Wisconsin. Illinois Missouri, &c. Mr. T. Biddle has most kindly given me a letter of credit for \$20.000. I leave about \$8000 in his hands. I take out about \$4000 to invest on others' account.³⁷

Wadsworth³⁸ writes to invite me to visit him on my route and offers to give me all his information about Mich. &c.

We take several pounds of arrow roote and cocoa with us, for the woods, when scarce of healthy food. We carry it in round tin canisters. For books I carry my old travelling companions, the beauties of Burke, Blair, Stern and Johnson,³⁹ 4 small volumes presented to me by Wellington⁴⁰ some years since.

Sep 18th. Sunday[.] I am all impatience to be off. Emily has packed my trunk full of clothes, medicine, bandages, lint[.] sticking plaister and the thousand indispensables which the solicitude of a wife suggests and which I shall dispense with the first convenient

³⁷Gordon makes no further mention of land purchases for other individuals. However, among the land entries for Berrien County on November 24, 1836, was an 80-acre tract assigned to "Bazil Gordon, Baltimore, Md." This assignment was probably made by John M. Gordon, who was making his own land entries at the Kalamazoo Land Office at this time. Tract Book for Berrien County.

³⁸This might be the elder James Wadsworth, but it is most likely his son, James S. Wadsworth (1807-1864), who attended Yale Law School in 1829-30, at which time he and Gordon became close friends. During the 1830's, in addition to being prepared by their father to take over the Wadsworths' New York estate, both James and his brother William invested heavily in lands in Michigan and Ohio. James subsequently became an important figure in New York state politics and was the unsuccessful candidate of the Republican party for governor in 1862. Offering his services to the Union forces at the outbreak of the Civil War, Wadsworth had risen to the command of the 4th Division of the 5th Corps of the Army of the Potomac when he was mortally wounded at the Battle of the Wilderness in May, 1864. Pearson, *James S. Wadsworth of Genesee*, the principal biography, is concerned primarily with Wadsworth's political and military career.

³⁹The authors referred to are: Edmund Burke (1729-1797), English statesman and orator; Robert Blair (1699-1746), Scottish poet; Laurence Sterne (1713-1768), the well-known English author; and Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), the lexicographer. Small books containing extracts of their works were very common in the early nineteenth century. Many were published in Baltimore by Fielding Lucas, Jr.

⁴⁰Wellington Gordon (1812-1888), younger brother of John M. Gordon. A graduate of Yale in 1831, Wellington Gordon lived in Virginia until after the Civil War when, his fortune ruined by the war, he moved to California and became a school teacher in San Francisco. *Obituary Record of Graduates of Yale College*, 3rd series, 429. This annual publication was divided into four series between 1859 and 1898 with continuous pagination in each.

opportunity. I have for one article a bottle of laudnum large enough to dispatch the great mad white elephant. My trunk looks like a boa constrictor after dining on a bullock and is too full to be locked. Such is the comfort of comforts.

I take with me in cash \$362.69½cts. and \$8000 in treasury receipts.

N. York Sep 19. 6 p. m. 95 miles[.] Arrived here at 2½ o'clock. We had a heavy fog, & on the Raritan, a small, hot and altogether execrable boat, one which has been running for some dozen years and will some day blow up with a fatal explosion. I amused myself for some time on the Delaware boat in watching the trade of a pedlar, who had a box of types and sold their names to the passengers. The tact of the Yankey particularly struck me, in so quickly seizing the character and hitting the fancy of each one who approached him, his art in elicit[ing] their names, shewing how it looked in print & his enumeration of the many advantages of a domestic printing press, all were graphic enough for one of Hill (the Yankey comedian's,)⁴¹ best characters. On his box was printed that sentence from Junius "The freedom of the Press the Bulwark of our liberties"⁴² He is an excellent physionomist and a man of great resource whose whole capital in trade is a little lead & the vanity of his species. Humbug & poor human nature! "How must an angel in Heaven be astonished at the spectacle of a proud or vain man." We rode over in the car with the Messrs. McIlvaine,⁴³ to whom Mr. T. Biddle introduced me, & some ladies. On the Raritan, we passed near a Revennue Cutter, lying at anchor. The water was as smooth as the polished surface of a mirror and reflected as accurately a perfect picture of the vessel. I delight to contemplate a finished work of art and derive from it the same pleasure which I feel in

⁴¹George Handel Hill (1809-1849), one of the most popular American comedians of the 1830's, who was famous for his portrayals of Yankee characters. *Dictionary of American Biography*, 9:31 (New York, 1932).

⁴²Gordon was perhaps thinking of the quotation, "The liberty of the press is the Palladium of all the civil, political, and religious rights of an Englishman," by the English political controversialist who is known only by his pen name, Junius. *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, 282 (London, 1955).

⁴³This was a prominent name in Philadelphia at this time. Joseph McIlvaine was city recorder from 1829 to 1835, and Richard, Hugh, and Bloomfield McIlvaine were also well-known individuals in Philadelphia. Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia, 1609-1884*, 1:609, 676; 2:1545 (Philadelphia, 1884).

viewing the beauties of nature. An analysis of the feeling will best explain its cause. When we behold a ship moving through the water or floating at rest on its tranquil surface, catch at a glance the symmetry and grace of the hull, perceive the nice adaptation to it of the masts and rigging and the fitness of the whole to withstand the shock of the wind and tides, bearing man in safety and comfort over an expanse of sea, the mind is carried back to the first rude boats of savages, traces them through the improvements of succeeding ages and finally reposes with satisfaction and complacency on the full development of the model before it which is perfect in use & form. Thus Homer is said to have been, in the beginning, a collection of rude poems, without harmony or arrangement, which have been corrected and polished by a series of poets until it has attained its present excellence. But the ship, like every thing beautiful, has the aid of moral association to heighten its charm. We remember, that forests have been cut down, the earth penetrated and the soil subdued to supply materials for its construction, thousands perish by shipwreck a miserable death and amidst the thunders of a sea fight; and finally, our beautiful little Cutter, while shewing its bristling guns below, bore upon its topmast the long graceful streamer dotted with Stars.

We have put up at the Astor house⁴⁴ and are lodged in the 6th story to bake under a metallic roof, with only a small bull's-eye window to let out the hot and fetid air. The table is well served, but the bill of fare is in french, and the servants being all ignorant Irishmen, you can get nothing but the dish before you, and but scantily of that. The water is very nasty and being cooled with ice impregnated with the "scum of pools" helps to allay the pangs of hunger as well as thirst.

⁴⁴The Astor House had been built by John Jacob Astor at a cost of \$400,000 and was the most famous hotel of the pre-Civil War era. Opened on May 31, 1836, the Astor was the largest American hotel of its day, but long after other hotels had surpassed it in size, its name remained a symbol for luxury and elegance. It had such advanced features for its time as gas lighting, room service, and water closets and cold running water above the first floor. The Astor's water was pumped from its own artesian wells. Located on Broadway between Barclay and Vesey streets, far up-town in 1836, the storied structure was vacated in 1913, and in 1926 the last remaining portion of it was torn down to make way for a modern skyscraper. Jefferson Williamson, *The American Hotel: An Anecdotal History*, 29-37 (New York, 1930).

"Sitiens Tantalus unda captat labentia labris."⁴⁵ What stables these mammoth Hotels soon become and how beastly it is to live in such crowds. In nothing do our Countrymen display less sense than in the act of eating their food. The importance which is attached to the preparation and eating of our food is no mean exponent of the intelligence and social refinement of a people. Indeed epicurianism is the flower which blooms on the top of the tree of civilization.

After dinner, I went down to the battery to witness the spectacle of a regatta. There was a large and gay crowd assembled but, it being near sun set, the rays were reflected in our eyes from the water and the boats rendered invisible to myself or anyone else until the race was over and they had reached the shore.

"Ad terram fugit, et portu se condidit alto."⁴⁶

When a boat race is mentioned, one always thinks of Virgil, the description of which is so far superior to any exhibition of it. (for all must be very much alike) that you are disappointed at the sight. I shall go to see Wallack⁴⁷ to night in the School for Scandal, my favourite play, the wittiest ever written. It is very hot.

Tuesday Sep: 20th 2 P. M. There was no boat to Albany this morning. We go at 5 P. M., and shall sleep at West Point.

From 9 till 11, we rode through the North West suburbs of the town and examined the improvements going on in that direction. We rode in the omnibuses as far as 24 st. There are some very handsome dwellings about that point, the residences of down town merchants, who use the omnib. by the year, and thus enjoy country air, and perhaps a large garden at a moderate rent. We afterwards walked through the burnt district and I was very forcibly struck with the great energies of N. Y. in thus comparing the immense building

⁴⁵A garbled version of "Tantalus a labris sitiens fugientia captat flumina . . .," from Horace, *Satires*, I, 1, 66. The last word is the first of line 67. ("Tantalus thirsting catches at the streams that flee his lips.")

⁴⁶Virgil, *Aeneid*, V, 243. ("He flies toward land and comes to rest in a deep harbor.") The event Gordon witnessed was the second annual regatta of the Amateur Boat Club Association. *New York Evening Post*, September 20, 1836.

⁴⁷James W. Wallack (ca. 1795-1864), English-born actor and the most famous member of one of the leading acting families of the Anglo-American theatrical world. He began an engagement at New York's National Theatre on September 12, 1836. On September 19, as the opening play of a double bill Wallack acted Charles in Richard Sheridan's *The School for Scandal*. George C. D. Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage*, 4:138 (New York, 1928).

going on in the heart and extremities of the city at the same time.⁴⁸ It is destined to become a second London, and her growth will be seen to be healthy if we reflect that her harbour and commerce open themselves to the world and our population being now 16,000,000 the number of new customers at home is 500,000 annually born. I made many enquiries this morning of the ticket collectors, drivers and agents, concerning the omnibus system, and am more than ever impressed with their utility in general and especially in extending the bounds of a city.⁴⁹ Measuring distance by time and cost, they accomplish on land what Steamboats do on water and are particularly valuable in our towns where, unlike the practice of ancient cities, every inch of ground must be built on to promote the great object of concentration. We have no such thing as the insulae or separate buildings of the Romans with convenient elbow room. Babylon was 60 miles in circumference and had gardens enough to support its inhabitants in time of long sieges. Omnibuses give the merchant this elbow room without a loss of time correspondent to the increase of distance. I was informed that there were 100 on Broadway alone, which make 10 trips up & 10 down the street each day and take in \$10 each per diem. This makes one pass every ½ minute and their aggregate revenue \$365,000 to which must be added those which run on the other great thorough fares, in all, perhaps, as many more. Families living up town, under our present arrangement of having public market places in certain streets (a very bad American custom) find the omnibus a great convenience, as they are allowed to bring their meats & vegetables home in them at a small charge. They issue tickets for change which pass current with all the lines and form a part of the great system of circulation. There is much to be seen in

⁴⁸The "Great Fire of 1835" had roared through the heart of New York's business district on December 16-17, 1835, destroying seventeen city blocks at a total loss of about \$18,000,000. A year later Philip Hone reported that 500 stores had been erected in the "burnt district." Daniel Van Pelt, *Leslie's History of the Greater New York*, 1:300-303 (New York, 1898); Martineau, *Society in America*, 2:265-71; and Allan Nevins, ed., *The Diary of Philip Hone, 1828-1851*, 1:233 (New York, 1927).

⁴⁹The omnibus was still a novelty in 1836. This horse-drawn vehicle, specially designed in 1825 for street transportation in Paris, had been introduced to New York in 1831. By 1835 over a hundred omnibuses were operating in the city. Omnibuses were introduced to Philadelphia the same year as in New York, and to Boston in 1835. Gordon's home town of Baltimore did not have any until 1844. John Anderson Miller, *Fares, Please! From Horse-cars to Streamliners*, 1-15 (New York, 1941).

a morning's ride in an omnibus. It is a new kind of companionship, that of riding 5 or 10 minutes on the same seat with a person you have never seen before, and, perhaps, will never see again. Every variety of character is thus continually brought into contact. It is a temporary state of barbarous selfishness. No one practices any civility and the last comer, is always looked upon as an intruder if the seat be full, and treated accordingly. I have been much amused in observing the different ways in which men of various occupations will enter and seat themselves in a 'Bus'—Your old stager, for instance, who pays by the year, trips in with the agility of a cat, notices no one, but only the seat, and, though it be full, yet if there be an opening wide enough for an entering wedge, he points his person and plunges down, without regard to the bruises he inflicts, or of that mathematical truth, that two bodies cannot occupy the same space. Every one rides in wet weather. We passed over the wood pavement in going up Broadway. The advantages of such a material over stone, seem to be, in avoiding noise, jolting, wear of carriages, dust, heat from reflection and, it is said, expense.⁵⁰ How the health of the city might be affected by the decay of the wood aided by the water & gas pipes remains to be proved. Certainly, a good paving material is a great desideratum in our cities.

Went to the Opera House Theatre⁵¹ last night. It is a beautiful building in its architectural proportions and decorations, but the atmosphere being compounded of gas and the exhalations of 1000 persons and withal very hot, I was forced to make a speedy retreat. We supplied ourselves here with some maps and other necessities.

Governor M. is now in N. York and we shall therefore not have the pleasure or benefit of his acquaintance in Detroit.⁵²

⁵⁰ Wood Pavement (marginal note by J. M. G.)

⁵¹The Italian Opera House was built on the corner of Church and Leonard streets in 1833. New Yorkers, however, were not sufficiently responsive to Italian opera, with the result that on August 29, 1836, the opera house began a new season as the National Theatre, with dramatic productions taking the place of operatic performances. Called by Philip Hone "the prettiest theatre in the United States," the National (or old Opera House, as some continued to call it) burned to the ground in 1839. Odell, *Annals of the New York Stage*, 4:136; James Grant Wilson, ed., *The Memorial History of the City of New-York*, 4:173-74 (New York, 1893); and Nevins, ed., *Diary of Philip Hone*, 1:99, 272.

⁵²Stevens T. Mason (1811-1843) was appointed secretary of Michigan Territory in 1831. In the following four years he frequently served as acting governor during the absence of the appointed governor. After being removed

Sep: 21st Wednesday West Point 10 A. M. 60+95—155 miles[.] I have just returned from a walk to Fort Putnam. I sat down on that spot of soft green grass, from which Mrs. Butler saw the view described by her in her books in such impassioned language,⁵³ and from which I had the pleasure of contemplating the same scene some years ago. What a small portion of the earth, as seen from any commanding point in our country, appears to be cultivated. The farms are making but a patch work encroachment upon the forest: And yet New York has 41 inhabitants to the square mile. Massachusetts has 78. Under proper cultivation an acre of land will support say 5 persons (in some parts of China 50 persons) and as a mile square contains 640 acres there should be less than 1/15th of Mass. under cultivation. We sat for an hour after our run up to the fort, in the north Portico of the tavern, awaiting the arrival of the Boat, and enjoying that delicious & refreshing prospect up the river towards Newburg, which surpasses, in my estimation, any other between Albany and New York. It was rendered more than usually picturesque on this occasion, by the spectacle of a Bald Eagle in pursuit of a Fishing Hawk, to wrest from it the fish which it had just taken and was bearing off towards the top of the mountain. The Chase was within view for the distance of a mile or more, and the screams of the Hawk distinct & shrill as it swept by us, seeking a shelter in the cliffs on our left. Before reaching them, it was overtaken by the Eagle and robbed of its prey, in the gracefull mode

from office by President Andrew Jackson in August, 1835, Mason was elected the first governor of the state in October, 1835. Neither of the principal biographies of Mason mentions a trip to New York in September, 1836. See Lawton T. Hemans, *Life and Times of Stevens Thomson Mason, the Boy Governor of Michigan* (Lansing, 1930); and Kent Sagendorph, *Stevens Thomson Mason* (New York, 1947). However, letters from Mason's sister, Emily, in the John T. Mason Papers of the Burton Historical Collection, indicate that Mason arrived in New York on September 19 and left for Washington on September 22. He also visited Alexandria, Virginia, and Troy, New York, before returning to Detroit in October. The editors are indebted to Mr. James M. Babcock, chief of the Burton Historical Collection in the Detroit Public Library, for this information.

⁵³The English actress, Frances Anne Kemble (1809-1893), published an account of her travels in America during 1832 and 1833 under her married name of Mrs. Frances Anne Butler. In 1835 Gordon wrote in his diary that he had spent two evenings reading the book, which he liked, but which he thought was too long. Gordon, ed., "A Virginian and his Baltimore Diary," in *Maryland Historical Magazine*, 49:210. For the description referred to by Gordon, see Frances Anne Butler, *Journal*, 1:208-15 (Philadelphia, 1835).

peculiar to that Pirate of the air. Nothing in the flight and wars of the feathered Tribes presents a spectacle more beautiful and animating, nor can the Fields of Falconry afford a finer sport. Perhaps it has a strange charm to me from being associated with some of the vivid recollections of my school boy days. "Many a time, and oft upon" the Bridge at Falmouth,⁵⁴ have I loitered, in going to & returning from the school of the Pedagogue Goolrick,⁵⁵ to admire the habits of the Fishing Hawk, its graceful gyrations & quick and dexterous plunges at a herring or taylor; but it was the trick of the thievish Eagle in turning the labours of the hawk to its own account and wresting away its prey that I chiefly delighted to behold. The Eagle, with its bald head, would be seen at a distance, sitting motionless on the blasted top of an ancient Locust Tree, (it is now cut down,) near the tail of Hollingsworth's mill race; seemingly dead to the motions of the Hawks and all around it, but in reality watching them with the sharpest ken of its vision, and sweeping, at a glance, the whole river from Brown's Island to the falls.

The post seemed to have been selected by the bald headed Robber with a peculiar sagacity, for it was immediately opposite to a deep Hollow, which the Hawks sought from both directions, in conveying home food to their young or retiring to their own meals. How often and with what keen relish have I paused to enjoy the rare sport of this aerial race and Battle. The Hawk would be seen poised on its wings and dancing from spot to spot in eager attempt at a fish, until, finally making a sudden and successful plunge, it rises with its prey writhing in its claws, shakes the water from its plumage and, mounting to a proper height shapes its course either to the Church Bottom or the Hollow, before mentioned, near Dunbar's Orchard, (both the familiar haunts, and the latter, the ultima Thule of my young wanderings,) But not unseen of the Eagle, which had already sprung from its perch with an electric bound, expanded its broad pinions & begun the chase. Flying like an arrow loosed from a bow, it gains fast upon the Hawk, which, though adding "wings to its flight" to reach the hollow, yet in comparison

⁵⁴Falmouth, Virginia, across the Rappahannock River from Gordon's boyhood home in Fredericksburg.

⁵⁵John Goolrick, at whose academy in Fredericksburg Gordon acquired his love for Latin and mathematical calculations.

scarcely seems to move. When nearly overtaken, it fills the air with its piercing screams and as a last means of escape directs its flight in short and rapid circles upwards. The contest is now for the ascendancy, which, being soon decided in favour of the Eagle by its superior strength, it mounts to the striking distance, and closing its wings, descends upon the Hawk like a thunderbolt. In this extremity, the latter, to escape the fatal blow, drops the fish and passes to one side. The fish is seen for an instant falling and glittering in the air. But it is only for an instant, for the Eagle, prepared by habit to expect this, continues to descend like an arrow, the next moment he has reached and passed the fish, and turning on his back, catches it in his claws before it reaches the earth, and bears it off to his eyrie, "soaring sublime in pride of place"; while the poor Hawk flies away to the woods, seeking a shelter to cover its disgrace and comfort itself with the cold consolations of "Fisherman's Luck." Such is an imperfect sketch of what is imprinted on my brain like a picture. What a graphic description might be wrought out of such materials by the pen of Washington Irving. I understand he is living near this place and, at present, engaged in writing a work to be called *Astoria*, after John Jacob Astor; the subject of which is an account of an expedition fitted out by that rich merchant, some years since, for establishing a post to carry on the Fur Trade at the mouth of Columbia River. This will bring the whole of that but little known region, with its thousand tribes of Indians, under his review, and present the finest field for his peculiar Genius to expatiate in. We may therefore expect a book which will be a mental memorial to perpetuate the existence of the Indian through future ages, while it hands down the name of Astor, the Patron, not the wealthy, to Posterity. He is to receive \$40,000 as a compensation; small enough too, for rescuing a name from oblivion, to which with millions of others much richer, it would have been consigned "carent quia vate Sacro".⁵⁶ *Astoria* will afford me much assistance in making my calculations of the

⁵⁶Horace, *Odes*, IV, 9, 28. ("Because they lack a sacred bard.") Washington Irving established his residence at "Sunnyside," near Tarrytown on the Hudson River early in the 1830's after his return from seventeen years in Europe. *Astoria*, which was published late in 1836, was written by Irving to satisfy the current demand for works from him on the western frontier. The book was a rewrite of materials collected by Irving's nephew, Pierre Munro Irving, from John Jacob Astor. *Dictionary of American Biography*, 9:504, 510.

probable increase of the new States East of the Miss. In view of the quantity of habitable region West, and it is in that connexion that I now notice it. No other works at present occur to me which describe the same regions besides Lewis & Clark's Travels and Long's expedition. The former I read many years since.⁵⁷ Mem. to read Washington Irving's *Prarie* sketches again, likewise Hoffman's letters from Mich. in 1834 which I have not yet seen.⁵⁸ We proceed on our journey at 11 A. M. and sleep at Albany. Biddle saw his brother Harry,⁵⁹ a cadet here, who took us over the grounds.

Albany Wednesday Sep: 21 10 P. M. 155+85=240[.] We arrived here at 9 P. M. after a tedious run of 10 hours from West Point. We touched at 22 places, and, estimating the delay at each at 5 minutes the sum total of detention was about 2 Hours. How much time is wasted in scraps. They are leaks in the cisterns of life. It has been calculated by some one that a snuffer who reaches the term of 70 years will have employed 10 years in the process of titulating and wiping his snout. The eagerness of travellers to get to the end of their journey, though there is no object to be gained thereby, is curious and observable. They are always enquiring the distance and hour of arrival of the captain and each other & discussing the winds and tides and chances of getting in 10 minutes sooner or later, with the gravity and interest of the important concerns of life. But should another Boat load of passengers be going the same route, then nothing can exceed the eagerness of both parties to get in ahead; and they will consent to have the steam raised to edge of bursting

⁵⁷Nicholas Biddle and Paul Allen, *History of the Expedition under the Command of Captains Lewis and Clark*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1814). Stephen Long led several expeditions into the West but in all probability the one Gordon refers to is Long's expedition to the Rocky Mountains, a report of which was published in Edwin James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains, Performed in the Years 1819 and '20*, 2 vols. and an atlas (London, 1822-23).

⁵⁸The works referred to are: Washington Irving, *The Crayon Miscellany. By the Author of the Sketch Book No. 1. Containing a Tour on the Prairies* (Philadelphia, 1835); and Hoffman, *A Winter in the West, by a New Yorker*. Hoffman, in his trip through southern Michigan in December, 1833, followed, in part, the same route that Gordon was to take.

⁵⁹Henry Jonathan Biddle (1817-1862), who died during the Civil War as a result of wounds received at the Battle of Newmarket Crossroads, Virginia, at which time he was Adjutant General of the Pennsylvania Reserves. Nicholas Biddle, comp., *Biddle Anniversary: Celebrating the 250th Anniversary of the Arrival in America of William and Sarah Kempe Biddle*, 48 (Philadelphia, [1931]).

point to gain this darling wish of little ambition. For it is that principle which causes this phenomenon. Thus in my school boy days, to be seated near the door when we were discharged to play, in order to spring out before any, was a point of much address & management, and great was the leaping & exulting the shouts of him who could boast that "He got out first". It is a modification of this Protean principle of our nature which keeps alive and imparts such spirit to our fire engine Companies during the severities of the most rigorous winter. Their great reward is to reach the scene of action first. In Pha: there is an individual, a man of middle age, of most respectable connexions and large fortune, who seems to make the whole happiness of life consist in the gratification of this feeling. The last arrangement he makes on going to bed is to have his fire clothes and implements placed near him, and night after night, whatever be the state of his health or the weather, he will start out of sleep at the first tap of the bell, jump into his breeches and fly with breathless speed to the engine house, that he may unlock the door before any other member of the company arrives. He has a sweet wife & several interesting children. But this competition has become a passion too deep and absorbing to be given up, even for them.

Knowing none of the passengers and being not much interested with the scenery, which has lost the charm of novelty to me, I occupied myself during most of the day in examining Force's Callender for 1836. It contains all the Statistics of the U. S. and is full on the subject of Public Lands. Time does not suffice to make any extracts from it at present, (while in transitu the observations of the day will fill up all my spare moments) but I refer to it now to shew the order in which my materials are collected. It affords abundant data for interesting calculations connected with the objects of my excursion. There is scarcely a commanding residence on the Banks of the Hudson, beside Hyde Park, the residence of the late Dr: Hossack, which with the grounds sloping down to the water's edge, is a perfect picture from the deck of the boat.⁶⁰ A portion of the farm belonging to

⁶⁰Dr. David Hosack (d. 1835), a New York physician, purchased the Hyde Park estate in 1827. The origins of the estate, which gave its name to the village of Hyde Park, date back to 1705. Harriet Martineau, who visited the estate shortly before Dr. Hosack's death, declared that no other one on the Hudson could equal Hyde Park in beauty. Frank Hasbrouck, ed., *The History of Dutchess County, New York*, 356-57 (Poughkeepsie, N. Y., 1909); and Martineau, *Society in America*, 2:53-54.

it has been lately sold at a price which refunds the first cost and sum expended in improvement and leaves a large balance to be divided among his Heirs. Such has been the advance of real estate throughout N. York and especially on the North River and the time is coming when residence on that stream will be in such demand for the large fortunes of the City of N. Y. that the enquiry will be, not at what prices they can be had, but whether they can be had at all. I was informed by passengers living near the various stopping places, that farms at the distance of 5 or 10 miles back from either bank, will sell for, from \$200 to 500 per acre, and will yield a profit to the cultivator even at those enormous rates. Alas! for the poor old slave states. The question between white & black labour is no longer one of doubt, as regards national wealth. To reason in favr. of the latter upon the experience of the past or any theories of the future, without regard to what is passing before us is like closing your windows against the light of a noon day's Sun and reading by the smoke of a tallow candle. May my candle go out "in a stink" whenever I reason against results which are obvious to the senses. Biddle has gone down to call on Miss ——⁶¹ I must write a letter home and then retire. We are putting up at a tavern above the State House. The Town appears to have been much extended in the direction west of this, since my last visit on my way to Saratoga in 1831 or 32. We leave tomorrow in the Rail road car for Utica, via Schenectady.⁶²

Thursday Sep 23rd. near Rome. $111+240=350$ [.] On the canal packet Hamilton. We left Albany in the cars for Utica at 7½ A. M. The tract of country through which we passed, as far as Schenectady, was, for the most part, a waste, composed of a beautifully white and fine sand, covered, in patches, with a thin growth of dwarf pine occasionally variegated with extensive blank fields as destitute of vegetation as the surface of a lake. Yet even this desert,

⁶¹Left blank in the manuscript.

⁶²The railroad Gordon took from Albany to Schenectady was the Mohawk and Hudson, New York's first railroad, which had been in operation since 1831. From Schenectady to Utica he rode the Utica and Schenectady, a new line which had been in operation only since August 1, 1836. David Maldwyn Ellis, *Landlords and Farmers in the Hudson-Mohawk Region, 1790-1850*, 175-76, 180 (Ithaca, 1946). For detailed accounts of these two railroads, see Frank Walker Stevens, *The Beginnings of the New York Central Railroad: A History*, 1-146 (New York, 1926).

I was informed, is made to return the cultivator one crop of indian corn by burning off the pine & turning in the ashes. It has, probably, the same geological character with those immense deserts which are said to skirt the Rocky Mountains on both sides and together present an insuperable barrier to the settlement of the Pacific regions by the march of western emigration, of which enquiry, more anon, when I am better informed on the subject. At Schenectady, we got into another train of cars by which we were whirled to Utica at the rate of 20 miles per hour, (i.e. $\frac{1}{3}$ of a mile per minute) as observed by the watch.⁶³ "From rise of moon till set of Sun, I've seen the mighty Mohawk run." But having passed over the same route in the summer of 1830 on a trip to Niagara, (where I first saw my wife) the country was familiar to me and did not present any thing of much interest. Many little villiages, however, and manufactories have sprung up along the road, in which the very improved style of buildings under construction and finished afford no insignificant exponent of the growth of the state. Our Train consisted of 16 cars, containing, by computation 362 passengers, and there are two running in each direction daily, making 4 trips.⁶⁴ From Schenectady to Utica, the Rail Road, Erie Canal & Turnpike run parallel and often touching each other, and notwithstanding, the rapid & cheap rate of travelling on the first, the two latter were thronged with travellers of every description consisting in a great part, of Emigrants.⁶⁵ Such is one of the great thoroughfares to the west, and such have been the immense results of the Erie Canal in throwing open to N. Y. the commerce of another world. But even these improvements have not been found to afford sufficient facilities to the commerce and travelling of the west and it is now contemplated to enlarge the canal to

⁶³Rail Road to Utica, p. 71. a. (marginal note by J. M. G.) On the reverse side of page 70 in his journal, Gordon inserted this note, apparently in 1837, following his return from Michigan: "This road commenced operations in August, cost \$1,500,000 and divided 7 pr: ct. in Janr. on a business of five months."

⁶⁴Quantity of Travel. (marginal note by J. M. G.)

⁶⁵To protect the freight business of the Erie Canal, the charter of the Utica and Schenectady Railroad Company prohibited the railroad from transporting any freight except "the ordinary baggage of passengers." As for the Mohawk Turnpike Company, which also paralleled the railroad's route, the Utica and Schenectady had to buy up the stock of the turnpike, at a stipulated price per share, before any passengers could be transported on the railroad. Stevens, *Beginnings of the New York Central Railroad*, 115-16.

twice its present size, and to construct a new Rail Road, from some point on the Hudson to the shores of Lake Erie.⁶⁶

At Utica we swallowed a hurried meal at the Inn where L. Corbin⁶⁷ and I put up on a visit to Trenton Falls in 1830. I enquired for my college classmate, Knox,⁶⁸ at this place, but learned that he had emigrated to the West. We have passed several little villiages on the canal this afternoon and I have just sent a note ashore at Rome to my old college friend and classmate Wm: Tallman of N. Haven, excusing myself from his invitation to visit him which met me at Utica. He married a Miss D. of N. Haven and is practising law near Rome.⁶⁹ One of my greatest pleasures in travelling is the meeting and recognition of my university friends who seem to be scattered through every part of the U. S. and number perhaps some thousand young men. Indeed, I have always thought that one of the chief advantages of a public education is the forming of so many friendships, at an age when the heart is most susceptible of them among a class of youth belonging to the best famalies of the country, who

⁶⁶In 1835, only ten years after the Erie Canal was completed, work began to increase its width from forty to seventy feet and its depth from four to seven feet. This project was not completed until 1862. For the importance of the Erie Canal in the settlement of Michigan, see Ronald Shaw, "Michigan Influences upon the Formative Years of the Erie Canal," in *Michigan History*, 37:1-18 (March, 1953). The railroad Gordon speaks of is probably the Erie, which was chartered in 1832 and was to extend from Piermont-on-Hudson to Lake Erie. Construction began in 1835 and was completed in 1851 when the railroad reached Dunkirk on Lake Erie. In 1842, however, with the completion of the Attica and Buffalo, through rail connections, from the Hudson River at Albany to Buffalo on Lake Erie, had become a reality. The New York Central Railroad Company was formed in 1853 through the consolidation of the several short lines comprising the Albany-Buffalo route. George Rogers Taylor, *The Transportation Revolution, 1815-1860*, 34, 84 (New York, 1951); Edward Hungerford, *Men of Erie: A Story of Human Effort*, 19-26 (New York, 1946); and Stevens, *Beginnings of the New York Central Railroad*, 350.

⁶⁷William Lee Corbin, of Caroline County, Virginia, a graduate of Princeton who had been a student at the law school at Yale in 1829-30 when Gordon also was at Yale.

⁶⁸James Knox (1807-1876), who was born in Canajoharie, New York. Graduating from Yale in 1830, he emigrated to Knoxville, Illinois, in 1836, and subsequently served two terms in Congress from that state. *Obituary Record of Graduates of Yale College*, 2nd series, 255.

⁶⁹William Morrison Tallman (1808-1878) was born in Lee, New York, and graduated from Yale in 1830. He practiced law in Rome, New York, until 1850 when he moved to Janesville, Wisconsin, where he resided until his death. Tallman married Miss Emeline Dexter of New Haven, Connecticut, in 1831. *Obituary Record of Graduates of Yale College*, 2nd series, 294.

are formed by education and adapted by their station in life to become the leading men in the community and the rulers of the nation. These acquaintances I find wherever I go; they are associated by that fine & enduring tie, the recollections of classical studies pursued in common and the heyday feelings of Youth, and they never fail to extend you the right Hand of fellowship with a cordiality, warm with the best blood of the Heart. Such friends rank second only to those of the same blood, who are the truest and most faithfull which this life affords. We have taken the Boat to Syracuse to have one night more to sleep and expect to reach Avon by tomorrow evening. There are about 25 passengers aboard and a berth for each.

Friday Sep. 24 Geneva. 9 P. M. We have just got in after a tedious day and night on the canal from Utica to this place. It was my intention to take the stage this morning at Syracuse, but on our arrival there such contradictory accounts were given us of the stages and rate of travelling that we determined to continue our route in the boat, though it was excessively crowded and we were compelled to stand on the deck in the rain. We bought umbrellas from persons on the Pier, (it being Sunday and the stores all closed) and with the aid of overcoats kept ourselves very comfortable during the day. The night however was a most miserable one to me. The cabin doors were closed when we returned to rest, the air quickly became irrespirable from the number of breaths and being soon awaken[ed] by a sense of suffocation, I rushed on deck in my dormant costume and remained there (returning only for a moment to dress myself) until morning. At Montezuma we diverged from the Erie Canal into a branch of it which leads along Seneca River to Seneca & Cayuga Lakes. The land on the River is for the most part marsh. There are hundred[s] of thousands of acres under water which will, at some future day, be recovered to the plough and give a name and fortune to some second De Wit[t] Clinton. We observed large formations of Gypsum along the tow path and, at many points, extensive quarries in full blast. I am informed that they are very valuable and have a market at the spot. We passed through a very thriving little manufacturing town a few miles back which enjoys "a water privilege" of some 50 feet and is growing rapidly into consequence. I was told the history of a Dr. —, ⁷⁰ a new Englander and part

⁷⁰Left blank in manuscript.

owner of the site, who has amassed a very handsome fortune, say \$500,000, within a few years by the sale of lots. There is a singular difference between the value attached to water power in the slave and free states which indicates, I think, very clearly a great disparity in their relative improvement. Should no stage run at an early hour tomorrow for Avon, I shall visit, on the other side of the Lake, Mrs. Robin Rose (formerly a Miss Nicholas of Va:)⁷¹ and an old Friend of my Mother's who expressed some regret at my not calling when I passed through G. in 1830. I am stopping at the same hotel on the hill which commands a view of the Lake.⁷² I have just mailed letters for Emily⁷³ and Susan⁷⁴ & having brought up my journal will now retire. Clem is already snoring like a suckling sow. "Sleep, Gentle Sleep, nature's soft, &c"⁷⁵

Saturday Sep. 25th 1837 [sic] 11 . o clock A. M. I visited the Roses this morning. Our route lay around the head of the Lake for two or three miles and along the Beach which has been very much encroached upon by the water since 1830. However we flew over some parts of the road 'behind' a span of very fine horses. Dr: Johnson knew nothing more pleasant than rolling in a hackney coach over a turnpike (not a macadamized) at the rate of 10 miles per hour. I think it not to be compared with a beach such, for instance as Nahant, with a fresh breeze & the thermometer at 90. The House (of the R's) stands on a gently swelling elevation which rises some 100 feet above the level of Seneca Lake. It is somewhat like Boscobelle & Bellair,⁷⁶ a little off the public road, through which it is approached. Having sent my name in, I was shewn into the parlour

⁷¹Robert Seldon Rose (1774-1835) and his brother-in-law, John Nicholas, moved their families from Virginia to Geneva, New York, in 1803. The estate which Rose had purchased on the southeast shore of Seneca Lake was renamed Rose Hill. Rose became prominent in New York politics and served three terms in Congress. His wife and seven children survived him. Dr. R. Seldon Rose, "The Rose Family in Geneva," in *New York History*, 23:26-29 (January, 1942).

⁷²Geneva (marginal note by J. M. G.)

⁷³Gordon's wife, Emily Chapman Gordon.

⁷⁴Susan Fitzhugh Gordon (1806-1878), sister of John M. Gordon.

⁷⁵"O sleep, O gentle sleep, Nature's soft nurse!" Shakespeare, *King Henry IV*, Part II, Act III, Scene 1.

⁷⁶Names of two Fitzhugh homes in Virginia. The former was the home of Thomas Fitzhugh (1725-1768), justice of Stafford County, signer of the 1765 Protest against the Stamp Act, and father of John M. Gordon's grandmother, Susannah Fitzhugh.

and scarcely had time to look around me, before Mrs. R. with the promptitude of Va: blood came in and gave me a most cordial welcome. We had a long talk. Having been absent from Va: 30 years she had a thousand questions to ask, & I many Deaths and other changes to recount. I gave her a history of our family from the first to the youngest and received one of hers in return. The Homestead which contains 1200 acres, and cost her late husband \$10 per acre, she has lately sold for \$50 per acre and the purchaser was offered \$30.000 for his bargain a few days after. His object is to build a town near deep water & he expects to realize $\frac{1}{2}$ a million by the sale of lots. So wags this western world. In the parlour hang two portraits of the parents of Mrs. R. who was, as Miss Nicholas, an unkind sweet heart of my father's. They are painted by old Icilius⁷⁷ in the style of my Grand Mother Knox's which hangs at B. Gordon's in Falmouth.⁷⁸ The House is two stories, of wood, and well furnished. Having sat 2 hours with the Old Lady, Her daughter, & Son the Dr: I took leave, with difficulty declining their pressing invitation to pay them a long visit. On my return I stopt at the fruit orchard and gathered a few peaches which though very inviting to the eye proved flavourless.

8 oclock P. M. $\frac{1}{2}$ way between E & West. Avon. Having waited until one oclock at Geneva for the arrival of the stage, which did not come in at the usual hour, we struck our names off the way Bill, took back our fare and proceeded on our journey in the two horse wagon I rode in to Rose's—The day was very fine and the country we passed through very highly improved & beautifully undulating. It is perhaps the most fertile we have yet seen in N. York. Farms along

⁷⁷In the margin, Gordon, or someone else, has written the name "Hesselius," which is the name Gordon had in mind when he wrote up his journal although he could not recall how to spell it. Gustave Hesselius (1682-1755) and his son, John (1728-1778), were the leading portrait painters of their day in the middle colonies. The latter painted the portrait of Gordon's grandmother, Susannah Fitzhugh Knox and also one of his grandfather, William Knox. See George C. Groce and David H. Wallace, *The New-York Historical Society's Dictionary of Artists in America, 1564-1860*, 312 (New Haven, 1957).

⁷⁸Basil Gordon (1768-1847) was born in Scotland and with his older brother, Samuel, John M. Gordon's father, came to America in 1783. Basil settled in Falmouth where he lived in a small house throughout the rest of his life, although, because he had sent out the last tobacco ships to England before the Embargo of 1807 became effective, he had become one of the richest men in America.

the road, we were informed, sold for from \$50 to \$75 per acre. We passed a number of settlers on their march to Michigan and farther West. One family had a house like wagon full of children, drawn by five oxen, with two cows following for milk. There are a dozen families putting up to night at the House we have stopt at. Many or most of them sleep in their different vehicles, all intelligent[,] decent looking people apparently Yankeys. Our Landlord, a very active, shrewd looking fellow, is from N. Hampshire. He tells me that he owns the stand & some two hundred acres of Land, which cost \$25 per acre and for which he would be very loath to take \$50 — all the fruits of his mere industry within a few years. Good farms, he says, pay for themselves at \$50 in 3 years, and he had rather cultivate improved lands at that cost than wild in Mich. at \$1.25 cts. The people of the neighbourhood are determined to have a cross cut to the Erie Canal, which can be made & is expected to be in operation in 2 years.⁷⁹ With such rapidity is this great artery of commerce shooting its branches into every corner of the state, raising the value of real estate 100 pr: ct: wherever it penetrates. I conversed freely with the Emigrants, among whom I remarked two men who were on their return home from an excursion to Cattaraugus County⁸⁰ whither they had been to buy wild land at \$10. It was fortunate that we stopt here, as it has been blowing & rain[ing] violently since we put up. Our dinner to day, which was made on eggs, cost the three 15 cents! We have [a] comfortable room to ourselves and a bed for each.

Sunday Sep. 25th at Wadsworth's Geneseeo 10 o. c. P. M. A pleasant ride of 20 miles brought us this morning to Geneseeo at ½ past 11 o'clock. After changing our apparel at the tavern we walked up to Mr. W's,⁸¹ which is about as near the villiage as Kenmore is to Fredg:⁸² J. W. ⁸³ my old college acquaintance was not at home, having rode that morning to Avon. We were shewn into the Parlour by —, ⁸⁴ the German servant who did the same office

⁷⁹Construction of the Genesee Valley Canal began in 1837. Portions of it were being used by 1840, but the costly project was not finally completed until 1856. McNall, *An Agricultural History of the Genesee Valley*, 125-26.

⁸⁰In western New York.

⁸¹James Wadsworth's.

⁸²Abbreviation for Fredericksburg, Virginia.

⁸³James S. Wadsworth.

⁸⁴Left blank in the manuscript.

when I visited the family in the year 1830, and whom I was very happy to recognise (He is a most accomplished servant & a man of some property). In a short time Mrs. W.⁸⁵ made her appearance looking more beautifull than ever and gave us a most gracious reception. A few minutes after Miss W.⁸⁶ came in from Church escorted by L. Corbin, whom I little expected to meet & was the more gratified to see, inasmuch as our first visit to this delightfull mansion was made together; on which occasion we spent 2 weeks between W. & Church's⁸⁷ (another college friend) who lives near Angelica some 40 miles west. I was much disappointed at learning from the family that Mr. W. Snr. was absent from home, on an excursion through Mich: and that I should not have the pleasure of seeing him nor, therefore, the benefit of his information about that State, before my departure. After a very nice cold dinner, (not the less palatable from the ride of the morning,) we took a stroll through woods on the south, and loitered among them for an hour or two, discussing "Auld Lang Syne" and some fine spanish segars. Many fine points of view I found much improved by clearings, rural seats, and nurseries of young locusts in some spots thrown into thick clumps. The Locust is not a forrest tree here, and is much esteemed as an ornamental one. We came back to the garden to enjoy a rich sunset & delicious fruit of many varieties; grapes, pears, peaches, plumbs of various rare kinds in great abundance. Nor must I pass over some of the most magnificent cauliflowers, that ever exposed their monstrous Heads to the light of Day. While we stood meditating among

⁸⁵Mrs. James S. Wadsworth, née Mary Craig Wharton of Philadelphia (1812-1874). A close friend of Gordon's wife, Miss Wharton's marriage to Wadsworth in 1834 had further strengthened the ties of friendship between the Gordons and the Wadsworths. The historian, John Lothrop Motley, once described Mrs. Wadsworth as "the most beautiful woman in the country." Pearson, *James S. Wadsworth of Geneseo*. 23-24.

⁸⁶Elizabeth Wadsworth (1815-1851), younger sister of James S. Wadsworth. By 1836 she was the sole surviving daughter of James Wadsworth. Due to her father's opposition, her engagement to Charles Augustus Murray, second son of the Earl of Dunmore, whom she had met in 1834, was broken off. Six years after her father's death in 1844, Elizabeth married Murray, but within a year she died in childbirth. Pearson, *James S. Wadsworth of Geneseo*, 26-27.

⁸⁷John Barker Church (1808-1875), whose family home was a large estate near Angelica, New York, a town named after Church's grandmother, Angelica Schuyler. Church graduated from Yale in 1829. *Obituary Record of Graduates of Yale College*, 2nd series, 214. For information on the Church family, see Neil Adams McNall, "The Landed Gentry of the Genesee," in *New York History*, 26:162-76 (April, 1945).

their stalks I wondered whether tomorrow's meal would send forth its edict of decapitation. About twilight J. W. returned and added his warm & cordial welcome to the rest, ordering our trunks up at once to the House. We spent the evening in cheerful & various conversation and retired to our rooms about 11. o'clock. My chamber is furnished with every comfort & many luxuries (just to my taste,) and now having written up my journal I can no longer resist the solicitations of the drowsy God beckoning to me from a couch as pure and fresh as a dewy flower. How passing sweet the slumbers of the light hearted Traveller.

Monday Sep: 26th. Rose with the lark and enjoyed a delicious morning by a run in the Garden, which adjoins the House. The mansion of Mr: W. stands upon the high ground which bounds the Genessee flats on the west, about 1½ or 2 miles from the river. It is placed on a gentle swell with a rich greensward in front, declin[ing] slightly to the road, from which it is protected by a wall. The view from the front portico is like a vision of the Valley of Tempe. Through the center of it flows, in devious course, the River Genessee, fringed with oaks worthy of Arcadia, one of which, of enormous growth, stands, the monarch of the meadows, with its gigantic arms dispensing shade to herds of cattle. It is larger even than the "Big Tree" in Falmouth under whose spreading branches were passed many an hour of my boyhood with a circle of Saturday playmates when the "recubans sub tegmine Fagi"⁸⁸ was enjoyed with a feast of watermelons & other fruits for which Stafford⁸⁹ was then so famed. How hallowed to the imagination is that spot, how dear to the memory that Tree, whose shade has been the familiar haunt of our childhood. Our feelings wind around its trunk and spread through every limb like a luxuriant vine crowning its sunny top with the green leaves of our hopes & the ripe fruit of our affec-

⁸⁸A portion of the opening lines of Virgil's first *Eclogue*: "Tityre, tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi." ("Oh, Tityrus, beneath the shelter of a spreading beech reclining" invoke the sylvan muse, etc.) Gordon uses his quotation as a substantive meaning a schoolboy's leisure. The tree on the Wadsworth estate, to which he refers, was the "Big Tree" from which the popular term for the area in and around the village of Genesee was derived. As Gordon predicted, the huge oak eventually fell into the river. The great trunk, however, was preserved. Lockwood L. Doty, *A History of Livingston County, New York*, 520 (Genesee, N. Y. 1876).

⁸⁹Stafford County, Virginia.

tions. The Genessee flats extend many miles to the right & left of the House. Beyond them rise a succession of hills which bound the Horizon at about 20 miles distant. In the meadows wander large herds of cattle & milch cows, and flocks of sheep. The villiage stands off to the right. The mansion of Mr. W. has been much improved since my last visit. It fronts 90 feet with a depth of 60 & has a fine portico in front with a large back building in the rear. There are 3 rooms on the first floor besides a well selected library of some 1500 or 2.000 vols. The passage or hall is wide & airy. The front Parlour 20 feet square & well furnished. In the second story there are 4 or 5 luxurious chambers—We are awaked in the morning by a Gong and all the family assemble together at Breakfast after the Good old Fashion. I gave one canister of my arrow roote to Mr. W's little Child 'Charlie'.⁹⁰ Judge Carroll⁹¹ & Saml.[?] Fitzhugh⁹² of Wheeling are to dine here to day. The former & the father of the latter live some 10 miles from here. I visited them when here in 1830.

2 o'clock p. m. I have just returned from a ride over the low

⁹⁰Charles Frederick Wadsworth (1835-1899) was the first of six children born to the James S. Wadsworths. Pearson, *James S. Wadsworth of Genesee*, 24.

⁹¹Charles Hobart Carroll (1794-1865) came to the Genesee country with his father, Charles Carroll, following the War of 1812. The elder Carroll had made several trips there before that time with his neighbor from Bellevue, Maryland, William Fitzhugh, and another Maryland friend, Nathaniel Rochester. Young Carroll entered politics and among other offices he was judge of Livingston County from 1823 to 1829. He was a Whig member of Congress from 1843 to 1847. In addition to managing his New York lands, Judge Carroll acquired much land in Kentucky, Wisconsin, and Michigan. He purchased half interest in the Kent Company, originally headed by Lucius Lyon and N. O. Sargeant, which platted the village of Kent in 1833 which, in turn, subsequently became some of the most valuable real estate in Grand Rapids. *Biographical Dictionary of the American Congress, 1774-1949*, 952 (Washington, 1950); Doty, *History of Livingston County, New York*, 569-71; McNall, "Landed Gentry of the Genesee," 162-76; and Albert Baxter, *History of the City of Grand Rapids, Michigan*, 102 (New York, 1891).

⁹²Gordon's abbreviation for Fitzhugh's first name is not clear. It is apparently an abbreviation for Samuel. Samuel H. Fitzhugh (1796-1849) was born in Maryland and came to New York with his father, William Fitzhugh. He later practiced law in Wheeling, Virginia (now West Virginia), his wife's home, until he returned to Mt. Morris, New York, in 1831. The editors are indebted to Mrs. Marie C. Preston, Livingston County Historian, Genesee, New York, for this information. Dr. Daniel H. Fitzhugh, Samuel's brother, acquired extensive land holdings in the Saginaw Valley, and it appears that Samuel also purchased some Michigan lands. McNall, "Landed Gentry of the Genesee," 162-76, and George Ernest Butterfield, *Bay County, Past and Present, Centennial Edition*, 54, 56, 84, 160 (Bay City, 1957).

grounds on Miss W's saddle horse, which is a brother of Eclipse⁹³ & shews his blood. The noble oak is fast loosing its tenure in the soil from the washing of the river, one half its rootes being exposed, and it requires but one or two little years to bring down into the mud of a puny stream that proud top which has defied the blasts of centuries. I measured it and found it to be 22½ in the girth as high up as my head. Mr. W. is making an effort to save it, but I fear an unavailing one. It will sink quietly down, during some night perhaps and the birds alone which are startled from their roosts or nests will note its fall. Shade of a venerable Oak farewell! We looked at the beef and cows and among the latter saw some fine specimens of the Durham breed which Mr. W. is going very largely into.⁹⁴ We next examined the Dairy which is on a large scale. There were on hand about 100 cheeses weighing from 50 to 100 pounds which bring, in N. York, from 9 to 10 cts pr: lb.

Mr. W., his son informed me, emigrated to the western part of N. York soon after the R war. He took up a large body of land in what was then the wilderness, Utica being on the frontier of settlement & containing only one log cabin. His brother who died, a bachelor, some year or two since,⁹⁵ accompanied him & was the partner of all his privations & acquisitions of property during their joint lives. During a long period they were surrounded by Indians, and secluded from all intercourse with whites. The cost of his Land was some 3 shillings per acre. His house was a small log cabin containing a bed & a large chest which was a table by day & a bedstead at night. Mr. W. is now one of the richest men in the state of N. York. He owns about 25,000 acres of fine land much of which is worth \$100 per acre, owing to the Erie Canal & other public works which are under construction. Besides which he has a large property in & near Rochester & other western towns. All the fruits

⁹³The original Eclipse was a celebrated eighteenth-century English race horse, one of three great horses of the period who became the principal male progenitors of all Thoroughbred lines. There was, however, a famous New York race horse of the 1820's also named Eclipse. The latter is the one to which Gordon refers. Pers Crowell, *Cavalcade of American Horses*, 173, 236 (New York, 1951).

⁹⁴James Wadsworth pioneered in the early 1830's in introducing improved breeds of cattle to the Genesee country. For this and other aspects of the Wadsworths' management of their huge farm, see McNall, *An Agricultural History of the Genesee Valley*.

⁹⁵William Wadsworth died in 1833.

of an outlay of some \$10.000, which he borrowed on his return from Europe, in his tour through which, he exhausted a small patrimonial property. He is now near 70 years of age, good looking, courteous in his manners, with a little dash of rough irony, and intelligent and agreeable in his conversation. Since I was last here, his wife & two daughters⁹⁶ have died. In the survivor Miss E. W. he is completely wrapt up, who on her part is all that the fondest affection of her old father could desire her to be. She does the honours of the House with a grace & warmth of hospitality that are in the highest degree charming. Her mornings are devoted to exercise on horseback and study, the afternoon to a walk through the Gardens & some light recreation in the house & the evening to her needle work & the pleasures of conversation, sometimes enlivened with amusing games. Upon the whole, not to linger over a bald description of this charming place, the beautiful view of the valley, the delightfull rides over the farm, the fine walks through the Grove, the delicious fruits of the Garden, the comforts & quiet of the Library and the elegant hospitality of the family, almost steal me from the sweet memory of my own Home.

Tuesday Sep: 27. I had intended to proceed on to Avon today, but the morning commenced with a rain and the family are so pressing that we remain a day longer, it is impossible to get away. Corbin too promises us to go over to A. tomorrow. Fitzhugh & Caroll did not dine here yesterday. As the weather is too bad to visit them, I shall likewise loose their information (which is extensive & exact about Michigan)⁹⁷ Mr. W. Senior has not returned. I hope to fall in with him at Buffalo. Read Childe Harold to the Ladies last night. Clem amused us with some recitations in which Corbin stood behind him & with his arms thrust forward did the gesticulation. The effect was most ludicrous, & formed quite an evening's entertainment. J. W. who has gone deeply into speculations in Mich. lands has given me his views at large on the subject and directed my attention in the same course through the state, which I had chalked out for myself, viz from Detroit to the Kalamazo District & thence to the Grand river. He has taken up about 11.000 acres in Van

⁹⁶Wadsworth's wife, Naomi, née Wolcott, and his daughter Cornelia, died in 1831, and Harriet, the oldest of his children, in 1833. Pearson, *James S. Wadsworth of Geneseo*, 23.

⁹⁷See footnotes 91 and 92 above.

Buren & Barry Counties which he has lately sold, partly on time, at 100 pr: ct advance. I am advised by him to invest every dollar I can raise in Public Lands @ \$1.25 per acre. Such an estate as his father's he thinks can be made with the same capital in 15 or 20 years without $\frac{1}{4}$ part of his privations. His brother Wm: W. purchased \$8,000 worth of Land on the Maumee for which he has since been offered \$80,000.⁹⁸ — Dr: B.⁹⁹ of Baltimore has been offered \$20 per acre for a tract which he took up 3 years since in the same part of the state. While at Niagara in the year 1830, I was on the point of visiting Detroit, and was only deterred by the pleasure of the Company of some Gentlemen who were travelling with me toward Quebec. Had I gone at that time & been put into the command of funds what Golden opportunities should I have enjoyed for amassing rapidly a large fortune. Still, much may be done during the little time that the field remains open.

Tuesday Evening. About 4 oclock we had a gleam of sun shine which we availed ourselves of for the purpose of pigeon shooting. The pigeons we procured from Mr: W's boxes. I brought down 3, Corbin 2. In the evening we read Dean Swift's art of punning & parts of Childe Harold. It is bedtime.

Wednesday Sep: 28 Avon 9 P. M. We came over this afternoon in Wadsworth's carriage. The two last days have been windy, wet & cold, but nevertheless I am glad that they have had their spell here rather than on the Lake for an Equinoctial there must be very uncomfortable, where the danger is not less than the fear. Corbin came thus far with us, he leaves for Albany in the morning & we for Buffalo. With great reluctance I left Wadsworth's, for I know no family who better understand or more gracefully exercise all the rights of hospitality. Clem is already asleep and I must follow his example to be ready for an early rise. I took several glasses of water as we came by the mineral spring which made me deadly sick, &

⁹⁸Paul Wallace Gates declares that James and William Wadsworth purchased 46,000 acres of land in Ohio and Michigan during the 1830's. Wadsworth family records show that James sold over 10,000 acres of land between 1847 and 1863 in the Maumee Valley. He also sold over 4,200 acres in southwestern Michigan, most of it in Van Buren County, between 1849 and 1861. Gates, "Land Policy and Tenancy in the Prairie Counties of Indiana," in *Indiana Magazine of History*, 35:8; and McNall, *An Agricultural History of the Genesee Valley*, 230.

⁹⁹Dr. Lennox Birckhead.

the raw chocolate which I took as a soporifick will assist in keeping my eyes open for half the night.

Thursday Sep: 29 Buffalo[,] American H. 9 P. M. We arrived here at 5½ P. M. having had a pleasant ride of 65 miles from Avon, at the rate of 4½ miles per hour. We passed through Batavia, the late scene of the Holland Land office mob.¹⁰⁰ The office was defended by several Block Houses which had been thrown up for that purpose. My fellow passengers were from Buffalo & Ohio & intelligent & communicative. They gave me much information about Buffalo: The Buildings in the vicinity appeared some of them in the dusk of the evening, to be palaces, the residences of persons who have amassed immense fortunes by the sudden & great rise of real estate. A large street has been laid off running directly west for several miles & intended for dwellings alone. It is to be travelled by omnibuses & lots on it are selling at several hundred dollars a foot. I was informed that Land within 2 miles of the city was selling for \$3000 per acre. The House we are in is of mammoth proportions and well furnished and kept.¹⁰¹ It is nearly as large as the Astor House in New York. It was built by Rathbun (the late Mr. Rathbun as he is called) the great forger.¹⁰² Next door is an enormous Ex-

¹⁰⁰The Holland Land Company was a stock company organized in 1796 to manage large tracts of land in western New York and Pennsylvania which had been purchased by a group of Dutch bankers. Long smouldering discontent with the proprietors led to mob action in 1836 which culminated in May in an attack on the company's Batavia office. The timely arrival of the sheriff with a large force of armed men dispersed the mob before blood was shed. Paul D. Evans, *The Holland Land Company* (Buffalo, 1924).

¹⁰¹The American Hotel was built in 1835-36, and had just been opened in September, 1836, a few days before Gordon's arrival. Until it burned to the ground in 1850 it was the best known hotel in western New York and was considered by many to be as elegant as the Astor House. The five-story building was capped by a shining gilded dome. Frank H. Severence, *The Picture Book of Earlier Buffalo*, in *Buffalo Historical Society Publications*, 16:160, 185 (Buffalo, 1912); and Williamson, *The American Hotel*, 47, 149.

¹⁰²Benjamin Rathbun (1790-1873), the dominant figure in the early development of Buffalo. His grand-scale building activities and real estate operations collapsed on August 3, 1836, with his arrest and the announcement that over a million and a half dollars worth of his forged paper had been discovered in circulation. At the time of his arrest he was employing 2,500 men. The previous year he had built 99 buildings, including the city jail in which he was now incarcerated. His most ambitious project was to have been the Exchange building, a colonnaded structure filling an entire block, with a dome 222 feet high. After two trials he was found guilty of fraud. Shortly after his release from Auburn State Prison, where he had been sentenced to five years hard labor, Rathbun went to New York City and became a successful hotel operator. Severence, *Picture Book of Earlier Buffalo*, 71-103; Wil-

change in an unfinished state which he was putting up at the time of his detection. I am informed that no man was more methodical, industrious or with greater appearance of honest & well earned prosperity than he. Four hours were his allowance of sleep. Among other operations he owned many lines of stages and it was his practice to be in his stables in this place, every morning by candle light to see his teams fed & harnessed. His prostration has arrested large blocks of buildings which were under construction in various parts of the town. We had to day a vicissitude[:] rain, sun shine & snow. "first it rained, then it thawed, then it snowed" At this place I recd. a letter from Emily, which is the first which has reached me since we left Pha: Being fatigued I must retire and write up my journal tomorrow. We leave in the Michigan¹⁰³ tomorrow at 9 A. M.

liamson, *The American Hotel*, 149-51; and Harlan Hatcher, *Lake Erie*, 215-18 (Indianapolis, 1945).

¹⁰³The steamship *Michigan* was launched at Detroit, April 27, 1833, and made its first voyage on October 11, 1833. Built by Oliver Newberry, it was the second steamer built at Detroit, and, until Newberry built the *Illinois* in 1838, it was the largest steamship on the Great Lakes. The 473-ton vessel had a deck that was 156 feet long, with 48 berths for men and 60 for women, and a paneled and gilded dining cabin. It was unique because it had two engines, not one, each with its own shaft and paddle wheel. Charles Fenno Hoffman saw the *Michigan* at Detroit and declared "that fine as our Atlantic boats are, I do not recollect any on the Atlantic waters, for strength and beauty united, equal to this." The mistake made in building these ships, however, Hoffman observed, was in putting cabins on deck, as on river boats, making them top heavy, so that they could not weather heavy seas and had to put into port in stormy weather. Hoffman, *Winter in the West*, 1:109; Milo M. Quaife, *Lake Michigan*, 151-2 (Indianapolis, 1944); and Silas Farmer, *History of Detroit and Michigan; or the Metropolis Illustrated. A Chronological Cyclopaedia of the Past and Present Including a Full Record of Territorial Days in Michigan and the Annals of Wayne County*, 1:909 (Detroit, 1884).

The Electric Interurban Railway in Kalamazoo County

A. Rodney Lenderink

MICHIGAN WAS A LABORATORY OF TRANSPORTATION experiments in the nineteenth century. Railroads and canals under state ownership, railroads and plankroads by private capital, street railroads and electric interurbans, all began to spin a network of travel lines throughout the state.¹

During the first third of the twentieth century, the electric interurban railways played a major part in the economic life of the Midwest. Their easy accessibility at the front door of many farms and villages made travel convenient and served as a transition between the horse-and-buggy and the automobile.

Local transportation systems of this early period were limited in their extension to the speed and capability of the horse car. At best its speed was only six miles per hour and distances naturally were limited. Modified types of steam locomotives had to be adapted for any urban system extending into suburban areas. Electric power, at this time, couldn't be transported over any system much longer than twenty miles, without great waste.²

The perfection of electric traction in the 1880's resulted in the rapid replacement of cable and horsecar lines and the construction of many new routes. Soon the streetcar lines began to feel their way out beyond the city limits into suburbs and then on to adjacent towns and resort areas. They were built in almost all cases on public highways. Poorly constructed track and the low speed of these early city cars limited narrowly their feasible range.

Four features of the interurban were its electrical operation, its

¹This article is an expansion of a talk given before the Kalamazoo Historical Society by the author.

²The Kalamazoo local newspapers: the *Kalamazoo Evening Telegraph*, the *Kalamazoo Saturday Telegraph*, and the *Kalamazoo Gazette*, are mainly the sources for the material and statements made in this article. Beginning in 1900 and continuing through 1911, the references are many. These newspapers are bound and filed in the Kalamazoo Public Library.

primary emphasis on passenger business, its use of cars heavier and speedier than city streetcars, and its extension beyond the limits of a city or metropolitan area.³

In 1890, the first authentic interurban line to be built in Michigan was begun. It connected Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor. The original power was steam and its engine was similar to those then being used in lumber camps, sometimes known as "dummies." Its total length was but seven and one quarter miles. In 1896 it became a true interurban when the line was equipped for electrical operations. The "Ypsi-Ann," as it became known, was the nucleus of the great interurban network of the Detroit United System.

It was a profitable enterprise, no doubt due somewhat to its novelty, but mostly due to the very great patronage given the line by the male students from the University of Michigan. The majority of the students at Ypsilanti Normal were girls. The steam railroad between the two cities charged a fare of twenty-five cents. This route averaged only forty passengers a day. The interurban fare was set at ten cents and within a short time traffic between the two points rose to over six hundred passengers a day.

Kalamazoo early became the focal point for the terminus of many proposed lines and also from it several lines were started in all directions. It appeared, however, that some were more interurban destruction than interurban construction companies. The granting or renewing of these franchises became important planks in the campaign promises of both Democratic and Republican candidates seeking the mayor's office in the city, and attracted promoters of all types: lawyers, doctors, majors, colonels, steamship owners, a son of a former United States senator from Pennsylvania, and the son of a former president of the United States, Russell B. Harrison, who tried to promote a line from Hammond to St. Joseph and then on to Kalamazoo.

When Major Loren N. Downs first began to talk about the building of an electric railway between Kalamazoo and Battle Creek, many people put little faith in the idea it would ever be a reality. The more the Major talked about it, the more skeptically people regarded it. This feeling continued until June 3, 1899, when it

³John F. Due, "The Rise and Decline of the Midwest Interurban," in *Railroad Magazine* (September, 1955).

was announced that a gang of fifteen men and three teams were actually at work grading the roadbed, one-half mile out of Battle Creek. Even then doubts were expressed that it would ever be completed. As work continued, however, people began to change their minds.

By December, 1899, the builders were hauling their own supplies on this railway between Augusta and Galesburg, using a steam locomotive belonging to the contractors.

About the same time the Kalamazoo common council was debating whether or not it would grant the Michigan Traction Company the franchise right to use the city streets. The council felt that the city should have something for this franchise; and that if it were granted, the requirement by the company to keep and maintain the pavement between the tracks should be written into the agreement. Objections were also made to the type of rolling stock the company planned to use, but after much debate a franchise was granted. The company had requested an entrance into the city over Lake Street. This was rejected and instead the council suggested that it come in by way of Washington Avenue and use the street car tracks already in existence on that street.

Early in January, 1900, due to the freezing of the ground, work on the line was almost completely suspended. Rails had been laid to a point within two and one-half miles of the east city limits of Kalamazoo, and the trolley wires had been completed to Galesburg. The spur line to Gull Lake had been completed, except for a short piece near the lake and this was certain to be finished in time for the earliest resort business in 1900.

Major Downs expressed disappointment by the end of March in the continuing winter weather. Little work remained to be done, and he was anxious to get at it. The weather finally cleared so that work could be started on April 5.

The next day the officials of the line received a surprise that was to delay them much longer than the weather. The Chicago, Kalamazoo and Saginaw Railroad laid a short piece of track across the path of the electric line, ten rods east of the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad. This was done, the railroad people said, as the start on their proposed connection with the Grand Trunk Railroad to the south. It was a smart move on the part of the railroad people,

for by doing so it would compel the traction interests to build across their line instead of vice versa and relieve the railroad of the entire cost of future signal installations, which would now have to be done by the traction people.

Within a week the Chicago and Kalamazoo Railroad, also known as the Belt Line, staged a second surprise. They also laid a short section of track across the Michigan Traction right of way. Their line was just to the west and parallel to that already laid by the Chicago, Kalamazoo and Saginaw Railroad.

The traction interest had not known that either line possessed any rights at these points. It came as a very expensive and embarrassing shock to the management.

In spite of these obstructions, and others imposed by the Michigan Central Railroad at their crossing in Galesburg, work continued. Early in May, with the exception of the large viaduct over these tracks in Galesburg, only two small bridges remained to be constructed. Work had been started on a new forty-room hotel at Camp St. Louis at Gull Lake which was to be completed by the first of July. It was hoped a big crowd from both Battle Creek and Kalamazoo would come to the lake by the interurban to celebrate the Fourth of July. Speed now became essential, for the company must have a car in operation between Battle Creek and Galesburg by June 25. If not, according to the terms of the franchise, they would lose all their legal rights. Cars must be running to Gull Lake by the Fourth of July, according to the contract with the landlord of the hotel, or he would have the building rent free for a year.

By the middle of June preparations for opening the line began. Tuesday morning, June 26, 1900, Major Downs, Dee Allen, and R. L. Rand, new superintendent of the electric road, took a trip over the line. Upon reaching the city limits of Battle Creek they decided the road was in splendid shape and that it would be open for business the next day.

That afternoon at 3 o'clock, a number of prominent business people were treated to a courtesy trip. The car "Comstock" arrived at Battle Creek about 2:30 P.M., with Major Downs as motorman and Dee Allen at the trolley. The car was operated on South Jefferson Avenue, and then passed around the lake line turn to

Main Street. The long coach made the three very sharpe curves in excellent style, indicating the perfect condition of its running gear.

At 3 o'clock the car was started on the first trial trip over the route to Galesburg. It seemed to fairly fly through the beautiful stretch of country lying between Battle Creek and Augusta. The latter village was reached in just twenty-two minutes from the time the car had left the corner of Main Street and Jefferson Avenue in Battle Creek although no effort had been made for a record. At Augusta, men were found at work stringing trolley wire on the Gull Lake spur. Weather permitting, it was hoped to have cars running to the lake by Sunday.

A stop was made at the power station where the company would take its power from the lines of the Kalamazoo Valley Electric Company where W. A. and J. B. Foote of the power company explained the workings of the battery of transformers to the group.

The trip was then resumed to Galesburg and ended just north of the village limits at the Michigan Central Railroad tracks. Until the new viaduct over the railroad was completed this would be the western end of the line. An inspection was made of this large overhead bridge, rising twenty-two feet into the air, and now nearly completed. It was a mammoth structure and an inspiring sight, but seemed almost needless on a level track, with the derailing devices then in use at the crossing of the traction line and the Detroit, Toledo and Milwaukee Railroad at Augusta. To prevent derailments, the motorman must stop his car and then wait until the conductor could stand upon the crossing. With a clear view of the opposite track, he could then operate the interlocking system.

The following morning, when the first passengers boarded the car, they paid a fare of twenty cents to Galesburg and were offered service to that point every hour from the corner of Main and Jefferson in Battle Creek. At the start only two cars were put into operation: the "Queen City" (former nickname of Battle Creek) and "Comstock". Cars "Augusta", "Galesburg", and "Kalamazoo" were to be held in storage at Augusta until the remainder of the line was completed. The five cars were as fine as any in use anywhere in the country. They were nicely furnished, seats were comfortable, and each seat was provided with a push button to

signal the motorman when one wished to alight. A large compartment was provided at one end for the carrying of mail and express. The overall length was forty-five feet. They were equipped with double trucks and four General Electric motors, and they were the latest type construction of the St. Louis Car Company.

No trailers were to be used on the line, but new cars would be ordered as service warranted. Three new open cars, boasting a seating capacity of seventy passengers, were expected at anytime for service on the Gull Lake branch. These cars were fitted with the Knell Air Brake, manufactured by the Knell Air Brake Company of Battle Creek; certainly a compliment to home industry.

The traction company was congratulated on the beginning of its interurban service, and it was felt that an important change would soon be noticed in the travel and communications with Augusta, Galesburg, Comstock, and the surrounding territory. Owning both the Kalamazoo and Battle Creek street railroad systems and now the connecting interurban, the company would have control of the railway facilities of over one hundred thousand people.

Rates of fare established on the interurban lines were as follows: from any point in Battle Creek to the city limits, five cents; from the city limits to the "guide board", five cents; "guide board" to Augusta, five cents; Augusta to Galesburg, five cents; Galesburg to Comstock, five cents; Comstock to Kalamazoo city limits, five cents; and from the city limits to any point in Kalamazoo, five cents. This was just one-half the rate paid on the steam railroad.

An amusing incident took place soon after service began. A farmer living west of Augusta had been led to believe that as his barn was very close to the interurban tracks the company would move it back for him after the line was completed. When he found the traction company had no intention of assuming this expense, the farmer took things into his own hands. To show how close his barn was, he stopped his wagon, loaded with hay, on the tracks allowing his horses to stand in the barn. He then proceeded to calmly pitch the hay into the loft above. Nothing could prevail on him to move until the wagon was unloaded, even though the interurban was delayed some fifteen minutes.

One night an interurban ran into a cow, derailling the car and forcing the passengers to walk back to Battle Creek and take the

Michigan Central Railroad home. Another time a car caught fire, but the quick thinking motorman backed the car into Battle Creek, where the local firemen quickly put out the blaze.

Although the spur line to Gull Lake still was not completed by July 4, the management assured its patrons that cars would run from Gull Lake Junction to the lake. The open cars had arrived and would be ready for business. Great preparations had been made for a large crowd and many Kalamazoo people contemplated going to Galesburg by the Michigan Central Railroad and then transferring to the electric cars for the trip to the lake.

Passengers were assured of a wonderful day with but a short walk from the temporary end of the line, across lots to the lake. However the company had not been able to get a right of way through to the lake shore, and the short walk turned into a half mile hike.

The completion of the overhead bridge at Galesburg, and the crossing of the Grand Rapids and Indiana (now Pennsylvania) Railroad at Kalamazoo were all that prevented the company from completing the main line. Although the management assured the patrons of an early completion, work progressed slowly, especially on the viaduct at Galesburg. Then on July 22, 1900, the local Kalamazoo newspapers carried the story that the traction company had changed hands. The purchasers were the Railroad Companies General of Philadelphia. Major Downs and Dee Allen retired as president and secretary respectively. The new management promised many improvements and an early completion of the Galesburg viaduct.

They were as good as their word, and by August 2, 1900, the bridge was completed, and the first interurban completed the trip from Galesburg to the tracks of the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad at Washington Avenue in Kalamazoo. Transfer was made at this point until some type of crossing could be worked out with the railroad people. The traction interest didn't think it would be much of a problem, and that if it were, the railroad commission would grant a temporary crossing until a viaduct could be built.

The interurban was officially opened the next day, when four loaded cars arrived from the east with passengers from Battle Creek and towns enroute for the Big Buffalo Bill Show. No schedule was

maintained that day; cars were run as rapidly as possible and were crowded on every trip. It was estimated that well over one thousand people were brought into the city for the show. Everything worked smoothly and was unmarred by accident.

As the line settled down to business, cars were operated on a schedule of about one each hour. By fall, the new offices for the Michigan Traction Company in the Kalamazoo House block were completed and ready for occupation. In the front was a neatly furnished waiting room, back of which was a ticket office; and in the rear, a private office for Superintendent Rand. Until the crossing of the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad was worked out and cars could be run through on the entire line, little use would be made of this depot.

By late September it was apparent that the crossing of the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad was no small problem. With rumors that the Chicago, Kalamazoo and Saginaw and perhaps the Kalamazoo Terminal Railroad would start construction of their lines south, it became evident that two viaducts would be necessary: one over the Chicago, Kalamazoo and Saginaw and Kalamazoo Terminal Railroads; and the other to pass under the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad. Either this, or one would have to be built over all three railroads.

Rather than go to this expense, the traction company decided to use an entirely new plan. They would change the entire route at Comstock, grade a new roadbed across the flats, the "Ox Bow", then along the river, coming into the city over the East (now Michigan) Avenue streetcar line. Meeting this line in the vicinity of the river bridge at Cellum Avenue, the interurban would cross the three railroads at the crossings already in use by the street car lines.

In January, 1901, rumors were circulating about an entirely new interurban line, a proposed Detroit to Chicago route. It was understood it would like to acquire the Michigan Traction from the Railroads Companies General as part of this line. Their plan would be to change the route at Galesburg and stay north of the Michigan Central Railroad tracks, eliminating the need of the viaduct at Galesburg and any need for the new proposed ones at Kalamazoo.

They would then come into the city by way of Lincoln Avenue and the East Avenue streetcar line.

Apparently the owners were not interested in selling, for nothing came of the rumour. In March, the Chicago, Kalamazoo and Saginaw Railroad agreed to share, with the traction company, the expense of an overhead viaduct at their crossings. The railroad would lower their tracks and the traction company was to raise theirs, meeting the state requirement of a twenty two foot grade separation. At the same time the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad said they would make no such concessions to the traction company. Being certain that something could be worked out, service by interurban over the entire line was announced and the temporary shops of the interurban company at Augusta were moved to Kalamazoo.

The Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad began the elevation of their tracks from East Vine Street south in April. The company said it was to relieve several minor grades in the area that had been bothering their freight trains. However, the elevation strangely enough would allow the traction company to build a viaduct under these tracks at Washington Avenue and meet the twenty-two foot requirement. This elevation of the tracks on the railroad at Lake and Division Streets is still a source of irritation to a motorist in a hurry today.

Construction began on the twin viaducts and grade separations, with the cost to be shared by the three railroads and the traction company; but within six days an injunction was instituted by Lay and Lane, promoters of the Belt Line Railroad. They contended that the embankment being thrown up by the steam shovels in lowering the railroads the necessary eleven feet, closed off all right of way to their land to the immediate south. Work was delayed until June 11, 1901, when the court decreed that work could proceed on the trestle. The expense of the injunction and court costs were charged to Lay and Lane.

During this injunction the traction company kept its men busy on the construction of its new car barns at Washington Avenue, Olive Street, and the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad right of way, just across these tracks from the viaduct construction. Two

buildings, 180 by 120, costing \$16,000 were to be built to contain ten tracks. The tracks alone would cost \$4,000.

Problems continued to plague the traction company. With the approach of the resort season, it was discovered that the owners of the hotel at Allendale, Gull Lake, had fenced in their property and thus closed off the approach to the lake. The hotel was offered to the Michigan Traction Company but they felt the price was too high and the offer was refused. Picnics originally scheduled for the hotel were transferred to LaBelle Resort.

Rumors were then heard that the traction company was going into the resort business, but not at Allendale. The management was still piqued at the attempt made to force them to buy this property, especially after the expense they had gone to in extending the spur to the lake.

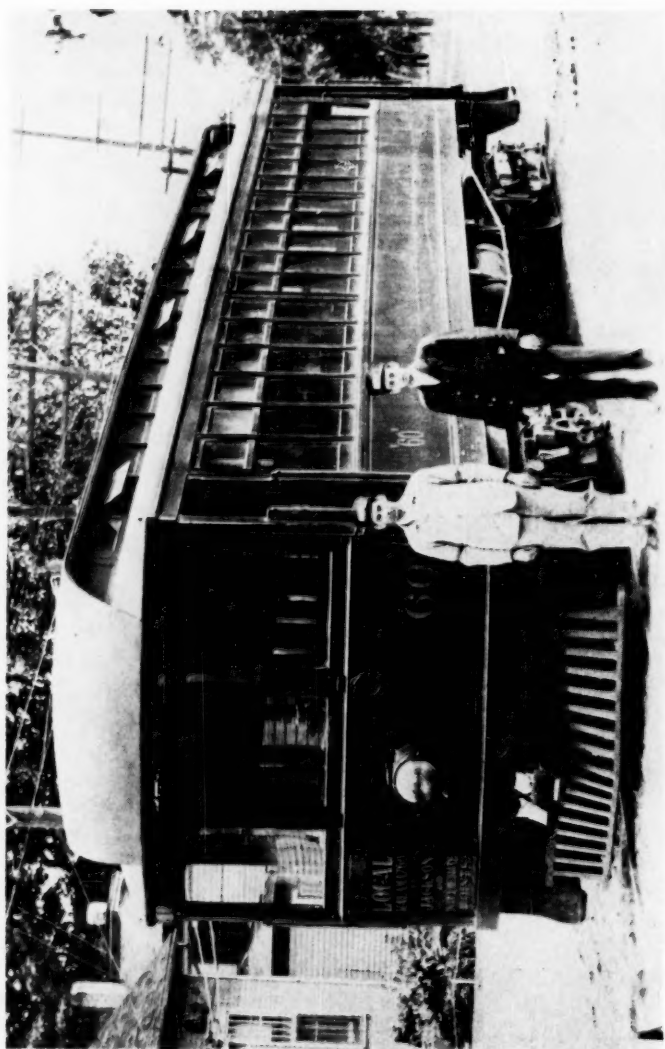
The hotel countered by refusing permission for any one to use their docks. With the fencing in of the spur line, the cars had stopped at this point and the passengers had been forced to walk around this fence to the lake. Here they could take the steam launches or private boats to their own cottages or to LaBelle Resort. The traction company then announced the purchase of land at Willow Beach. A resort was to be built there, and the spur line extended north to this property.

With their guard down at this announcement, the hotel interest was surprised to find a dock being built almost at their front door. This was really a big surprise because they thought they owned all the lake property in this area. It had been discovered by the traction interest that the hotel people didn't have any title to a piece of land which had been the dumping grounds of old Camp St. Louis. With the plan of forcing the Michigan Traction Company to buy their hotel all but defeated, a new blow was struck. The traction line was to be extended around the lower end of the lake to Yorkville. The spur to Allendale would then be abandoned and LaBelle become the resort Allendale could have been. For the present, cars would alternate, one to Allendale and the next to LaBelle.

On October 21, 1901, the double over and under viaducts crossing the Chicago, Kalamazoo and Saginaw and the Belt Line Railroads and then passing under the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad



MICHIGAN TRACTION COMPANY-GULL LAKE BRANCH, 1907-SOUTH END OF LAKE



PASSENGER #60 AT AUGUSTA POWER STATION

were completed. The car "LaBelle" had the honor of being the first to ride the roller coaster. With a rise of twenty-two feet and then a drop of forty-four feet in six hundred and fifty feet, it certainly resembled one. With this problem no more than completed, the company found they faced the same situation in Augusta at their crossing of the Detroit, Toledo and Milwaukee Railroad. It was apparent another viaduct would have to be built at the twenty-two foot height and over one thousand feet in length. This would be another tremendous expense to the Michigan Traction.

With the line at last completed, raises of 17½ cents per hour were granted to first-year men and 19 cents an hour to three-year men. A new time schedule was also put into effect. Although the Kalamazoo waiting room could now be used, the cars still had to be turned around at the corner of East Main and Portage Streets, so the time card listed this point as the place of departure. A franchise was now secured for the extension of the Gull Lake spur from Yorkville to Richland. It would then follow the Gull Road from Richland to Kalamazoo. When completed this would offer a much shorter route for the people of Kalamazoo to Gull Lake.

An accident in the fall of 1903 on the viaduct at Galesburg frightened either the insurance company, the management, or both. An interurban broke an axle while crossing the bridge and fortunately hit a telephone pole, which kept it from falling onto the railroad tracks below. Within a few days the management released a story to the newspapers that a subway costing \$8,000 was to be built under these tracks and the viaduct would be abandoned. This may have calmed the fears of the passengers who worried about riding the line; but the subway was never built.

A crisis in the spring of 1904 brought about a rather strange condition. A severe flood extended along the entire Kalamazoo Valley and transportation facilities were badly crippled. The Michigan Central Railroad found they couldn't operate through trains, being only able to get from Kalamazoo to Augusta. The Michigan Traction Company was able to operate from Augusta to Battle Creek, but couldn't get to Kalamazoo. The two rivals issued transfers and joined hands to serve the public between the two cities.

Business continued to prosper and soon the number of freight cars running between Kalamazoo and Battle Creek doubled. New motors were installed in the passenger cars for better service. A lot was purchased on Portage Street and plans prepared for a new terminal and freight warehouse. The freight house would be built in the rear of the proposed passenger depot and would feature an off street track for the cars. It was hoped that this would help to relieve the waiting and shifting of both interurban and street-cars, then in practice. When this was completed, all facilities would be in one location and the freight house on Farmers Avenue could be abandoned.

With the constantly increasing passenger business, a new bid for even better service was offered. Every other interurban was to become a limited car. Local cars would stop at all crossings as before, while the limited cars would stop only at stations. The trip on the limited between Battle Creek and Kalamazoo would take only one hour.

A news story of late August, 1905, was of interest to the traction company. The Michigan Central Railroad announced it had purchased water rights at Niagara Falls and the entire eight thousand miles of railroad would be electrified. Rate wars would be instituted then between the railroad and all the competing interurban railways. Of special note to the people in the Kalamazoo-Battle Creek area was the news that a gasoline car would be put in operation on the Allegan branch of the Michigan Central Railroad. With this car, direct competition could be given the traction company for the business to Gull Lake.

December 12, 1905, the Michigan Traction Company was once again sold. This time it passed into the control of the Mills-Moore-Elliott syndicate. With this purchase 193 miles of city and interurban lines came under their control. A line connecting Lansing with Jackson was already under construction. Plans were being made to build a line from Lansing to Owosso and Flint. A route south from Jackson to Adrian, connecting with their Toledo line, was also being suggested.

The city lines of Kalamazoo had fourteen miles of street railroad, Battle Creek also had fourteen miles, and the connecting interurban, including the Gull Lake spur, accounted for thirty miles.

The Battle Creek-Jackson traction line was thirty-seven miles long; the Lansing-St. Johns, twenty-two miles; the Pine Lake extension, eight miles; and the Lansing city lines, fifteen miles long.⁴

The new syndicate announced the entire group would bear the new name of Michigan United Railways. Clean cars, better service, and all new schedules would take place in short order.

News of the success of these early interurban lines spread rapidly throughout the state. As every village or city had been determined to have a railroad in the 1860's or 1870's, they were now as equally determined to have an interurban electric line.

Another early company was the Grand Rapids, Allegan and Kalamazoo Electric Railway. The Kalamazoo Township board at its meeting on Monday, December 17, 1900, granted it a franchise to go through the northern part of the township along the old plank road to the city limits.

With the granting of the franchise, William Aldrich Tateum of Grand Rapids told the board that that completed the chain of franchises necessary for construction between Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo, and that his company, which was composed of Philadelphia capitalists, would be ready to start construction by the early part of the new year. Surveyors were already at work on the grading and right of way, and cars should be running by January 1, 1902.⁵

Associated with him was William H. Patterson of Kalamazoo and Philadelphia, son of former United States Senator, J. J. Patterson of Pennsylvania. A branch from Allegan to South Haven and another to Douglas and Saugatuck would also be built as branches of this road.

At the same time, Arthur D. Prosser, vice president and general manager of the proposed Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo Traction, was busy securing franchises. His line was to be an "air line route" beside the once famous Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids plank road, and would be ten miles shorter than the route through Allegan, as well as one hour quicker.⁶

A franchise was granted Prosser to enter the city on Douglas Avenue. Tracks were to be laid on Rose Street between South

⁴Thirty-third Annual Report of the Commissioner of Railroads of the State of Michigan for the Year 1905 (Lansing, 1906).

⁵Kalamazoo Gazette, December 18, 1900.

⁶Kalamazoo Evening Telegraph, July 4, 1900.

Street and Main Street, and then by using the existing street car lines feature a loop.

Patterson announced he would be willing to let Prosser use the same roadbed between Kalamazoo and Plainwell. At the same time he stated that his main offices and car barns, would be located in Allegan. The city offered him two routes into the city. The first was on Douglas Avenue to the South Haven branch of the Michigan Central Railroad; then to Patterson Street on private right of way, which would eliminate the crossing of the railroad tracks; down Patterson Street to West (now Westnedge) Street; up West Street and a connection with the existing street car line. The other route was over the celery marshes by way of North West Street and connecting with the local traction lines at the corner of West and North Streets. A right of way was deeded the Grand Rapids, Allegan, and Kalamazoo Traction by way of Douglas Avenue.

With the completion of an inspection trip over the right of way, Patterson stated that he was ready to begin construction. Rails had been purchased and first delivery promised by October. Grading would be completed by the first of 1902. At a common council meeting, Patterson represented his line and asked for an extension of his franchise from January 1, 1902 to October 1, 1902. He also asked for a change in the route of entering the city. He preferred to enter the city by way of Rose Street. The franchise was extended, but the route change denied.

Prosser was also supposed to be at this meeting to explain the delay in the building of the Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo Electric. As he failed to appear, his franchise expired and nothing was ever done with his line.

With every assurance of success, Patterson departed for Hartford to look into the possibility of extending his line from Allegan, through Gobleville (now Gobles), Paw Paw, Lawrence, and Hartford to Benton Harbor. A new dam site on Pine Creek for power for the Grand Rapids, Allegan, and Kalamazoo was also acquired.

Rumors were also current that the Grand Rapids, Holland and Lake Michigan Electric would also come to Kalamazoo. A line would be run from Jamestown to Allegan and then make arrangements with Patterson for the use of his line to Kalamazoo. Patterson's name continued to pop up at council meetings in Kala-

mazoo with requests for extensions of his franchise. The local papers began to poke fun at him by ending most of their stories about the council meetings with the statement, "Same old Patterson present with more promises of his electric line." At the first meeting in 1903, a new route was requested of the council. It would meet the streetcar line at North and West Streets, follow that line downtown, and then loop around Water Street to Burdick Street, and then north on that streetcar line. Patterson promised that if this was granted his line would be in operation by the early part of 1904.

In February the council offered Patterson a new franchise if he would move his offices from Allegan to Kalamazoo. This would give the city the benefit of the taxes. Patterson refused, as he felt it would be too great an expense to re-incorporate. He agreed to work out some arrangement with the Michigan Traction Company and withdrew his request for his own tracks in the city. In thinking it over during the night, he announced the next day that he had changed his mind and that he would move his offices to Kalamazoo.

The council now decided to reconsider the franchise. It was finally decided that they would rather have the Grand Rapids, Allegan, and Kalamazoo Electric Railway come into the city by way of Winslow (now Woodward) Avenue in place of West Street and with this change the franchise was passed once again.⁷

With the placing of the bonds on the market by N. W. Harris and Company, the name of the line was changed to the Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo Valley. It was announced that L. D. Allen of the Chicago Edison Company would have charge of construction; and Wells and Company, contractors, would build the line. It was expected to build to Kalamazoo before snow arrived. Patterson was complimented by the paper for having worked so hard and they said he was deserving of success.

Two days later Patterson stated that no contracts had been let. The statements in the paper (July 6, and 8, 1904) were released, he said by a W. H. Tostevin, who in company with Clarence Tracy was trying to secure a franchise in Allegan.

With the bond issue sold, Patterson stated he would be ready

⁷Kalamazoo *Evening Telegraph*, February 17, 1903.

to start construction. His estimates were that his line could be built for \$2,500 a mile. Construction would start from Kalamazoo by the Westinghouse Electric and Manufacturing Company of New York. Its route now would be through Plainwell, Otsego, Martin, Shelbyville, Bradley, Wayland, Moline, Carlisle, and then into Grand Rapids. Branches would be built from Otsego to Allegan and from Shelbyville to Gun Lake. The contract for the electrical equipment alone would be \$350,000 and the line from Otsego to Allegan would cost from \$1,200 to \$1,500 a mile. A trust mortgage was filed with the register of deeds as proof that at long last the line was to be built.

With active surveying being done between Kalamazoo and Plainwell, it was promised that the line would be in operation by the first of 1906. First construction was started by Mitchell Brothers, contractors, on a section paralleling the old plank road from the Wallace Farms north to Cooper Village. This section was in a natural valley and was expected to be a beautiful approach to the city.

With construction at last started, Patterson renewed his franchise for the construction of a power dam near Allegan. With the grading for his road actually under way (March, 1906), he again appeared before the council and asked for another change of route into the city. His new plan called for his coming into the city on North Rose Street to Main Street, crossing under the Michigan Central Railroad by a fifteen foot subway, which his line would build. It was expected this would have to be done, as the local power company had a contract with the Michigan Traction Company, which stated they couldn't sell power to any other traction company without their approval. City aldermen and power officials found there was such a clause, but decided it wasn't meant to keep out other lines, and decreed that the Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo Valley would have to come into the city over the tracks of the city lines.

On January 10, 1908, W. H. Patterson died of pneumonia at the age of 49. Without his guiding hand, the project fell apart and construction ceased. Senator Patterson came to Kalamazoo in 1909 with plans to revive the project his son had started, but nothing materialized, and no iron was ever laid on the approximately fifteen miles of roadbed completed in Kalamazoo and Allegan

counties. An attempt was also made in 1909 by the Chicago and West Bound Electric Railway to take over some of the Patterson interests.

With the knowledge that the new owners of the Michigan Traction Company planned on extending that line westward from Kalamazoo, the equivalent of an Oklahoma land rush took place in the five years between 1901 and 1906. Over twelve proposed lines petitioned various villages in this area of the state for franchise rights for electric lines.

Another early line active in 1900 was the Kalamazoo Valley Traction. The spokesman for this line was Attorney L. A. Palmer of Battle Creek. His line was to enter the city on the West Main street car line. It would go out West Main through Oshtemo Township until it reached Ketchums Hill at Whiskey Run. There it was to turn to avoid the hill and continue through Almena, to Paw Paw, Lawrence, Hartford, and Benton Harbor.

Short branches were to be built from Paw Paw to Lawton and Decatur. Another would go from Lawrence to South Haven by way of Bangor. An alternate route was to by-pass Paw Paw and run through Glendale to Bangor. Here it would pass under the Pere Marquette Railroad and then continue on to South Haven. A tentative franchise was granted the line by the Bangor council December 19, 1900. Lawyer Palmer advised that Chicago capitalists were interested in the promotion of the line and in continuing it on from Kalamazoo to Detroit.

Another line from Kalamazoo to Benton Harbor was proposed by J. W. VanCleve of New York City and Benton Harbor. He was also proprietor of the South Bend and Benton Harbor Railway. Accompanied by Samuel R. Bailey of Benton Harbor, they met with the Watervliet Township board on November 24, 1900, and asked for the privilege of taking possession of the public highway across the township for their Kalamazoo and Lake Michigan Railway. The board was offered \$1.00 compensation for a perpetual and probably priceless charter. As this was the third railway enterprise then asking for these rights and admissions to the village, the request was tabled and nothing further was done with the request.

Plans for an extensive line, running from Iowa, Illinois, Indiana,

and then through Michigan to Detroit, under the name of the Western Michigan Traction, were announced by Attorney Alvin P. Cady of Benton Harbor in the summer of 1901. This was to be a link in the often talked about Detroit to Chicago traction. It was announced that it would be running cars to Kalamazoo by 1902 and before the end of this same year have a spur line in operation to Allegan. Surveyors were already at work on the line for a tunnel to carry the railway under Benton Harbor. The property was sold at public auction some time later for \$10. This sale, reported in 1902, surprisingly included considerable track.

When Samuel J. Dunkley, promotor of a steamship line from South Haven to Chicago, returned from New York City, he announced, according to April, 1901, newspaper accounts, that he had interested capitalists there in an air line electric railway from Kalamazoo to South Haven. The following year negotiations were advanced far enough so that the promotors: Dunkley, Charles Williams of the Dunkley-Williams Steamship Company, George Bardeen of the Bardeen Paper Company of Otsego, and Walter S. Dewing of the Chicago, Kalamazoo and Saginaw Railroad could state that it definitely would be built. Cars would be running to Paw Paw Lake by 1903, the promotors promised. At South Haven the line would connect with the W. A. Frisbe Railway, which would be built to that city from Benton Harbor.

A minor delay over a few franchises and the securing of some right of ways was all that was holding up construction. Dunkley promised in October, 1903, that construction would be pushed through as rapidly as possible. These minor details became much more of a problem than Dunkley had anticipated. The Western Engineering and Construction were planning a line from St. Joseph to Kalamazoo and although this offered some competition for village franchises, it was much more difficult to explain to these boards the difference between the Kalamazoo, Lake Shore and Chicago Traction and another proposed line — The Kalamazoo and Lake Shore Traction.

The Graham-Morton Steamship people, no doubt because of the Dunkley-Williams interest in the Kalamazoo, Lake Shore and Chicago Traction, decided to promote an electric line between Benton Harbor and Kalamazoo. All these promotors were actively engaged

in securing the needed right of ways and required franchises. All were equally insistent that their line would be built.

George Bardeen told newsmen that his line would be built from South Haven to Saugatuck first, and would be in operation between these two cities by 1905. Work would be rushed to complete a section between South Haven and the Saugatuck branch of the Grand Rapids, Holland and Lake Michigan. Perhaps the promoters felt they had better do this before that traction company got the idea themselves. This construction would involve ninety-nine miles of main line at a cost of \$2,200 a mile. Later, it was announced the line would be extended from South Haven to Watervliet.

Representatives of the Dunkley-Williams interest were in Paw Paw on February 28, 1905, promising that their line would be in operation between South Haven and Paw Paw by midsummer and completed to Kalamazoo by 1906. Outside of securing the right of way, no other assistance would be required of the people of Paw Paw. A franchise was granted by this village, with the condition the line would be in operation by July 1, 1906.

By the middle of April, a request for a franchise was made of the Kalamazoo common council. The proposed route was to enter the city on West Michigan Avenue, cross the Michigan Central Railroad at that point and continue on to Lovell Street. Then they were to go east on Lovell Street to Davis Street, swing south to either Walnut or Vine Streets, thence east along on one of these streets to Jasper. Then they were to go north on Jasper to First Street (now Walnut), then east again on First Street to Pitcher Street, north on Pitcher Street to Kalamazoo Avenue, west on Kalamazoo Avenue to Rose Street, and south on Rose Street to the corner of Rose and Water Streets. Here the promoters planned a depot for freight and passengers. It was also requested that a loop around this corner, including Water, Church, and Eleanor, be granted. This would enable the cars to be turned around and they would then leave the city by the same route. The council was told that surveys had been completed to the west side of Kalamazoo and all that was necessary to begin the construction was the issuing of the franchise. After some discussion an alderman questioned this route and suggested coming in by way of Alamo Avenue, Douglas Avenue, and Patterson Street, and then up Rose

Street. When it was pointed out to him that this route would cost fully \$25,000 more than the former route, it was dropped.

This long circular route of private street railways within the city wasn't looked upon too favorably by the city officials. Instead they offered a franchise into the city by way of the W. Main Street car line to Rose Street and then north on that street to the site of their proposed depot location. The Michigan United Traction were asked to extend a spur from their Asylum Avenue (now Oakland Drive) line out Michigan Avenue to the Michigan Central Railroad tracks. They would then meet the proposed new electric line at this point. If this wasn't done, the Michigan United Traction would risk the forfeiting of their own franchise.

The agreement was satisfactory to the Dunkley-Williams interest and the franchise was accepted, with the promise that work would start at once. They were as good as their word; scoop shovels and gravel wagons were shipped to South Haven on the South Haven branch of the Michigan Central Railroad, and work was started June 6, 1905.

Apparently money was not as plentiful as first suspected and a shorter route to Kalamazoo from Paw Paw had to be found. While checking some alternate routes the surveyors stumbled on the old "Calico Grade," which had been graded before the Civil War to connect Paw Paw and Paw Paw station (now Lawton). It had never been used, and with but a little work it would be ready for rails. It quickly passed into the hands of the Kalamazoo, Lake Shore and Chicago Traction Company.

Meanwhile the Michigan Central Railroad had been busy relocating and double tracking its line between Lawton and Kalamazoo. An entirely new line had been built from Mattawan to Kalamazoo, bypassing the village of Oshtemo altogether. Perhaps to appease the citizens of this little community for the loss of their railroad, this portion of the line now to be abandoned was leased to the Dunkley-Williams Traction. Now with the exception of a connection between Mattawan and Lawton, there was a complete line between Paw Paw and Kalamazoo. They would be able to parallel the Michigan Central Railroad to Eleanor Street. Then east on Eleanor to Rose and north to their proposed depot site. It would be little trouble to go around the block with their pro-

posed loop and back out of the city on Eleanor Street. The merchants of the city, according to Kalamazoo news articles in August, 1905, set up a howl at once to this arrangement. They wanted the line to come down Main Street, so that these prospective customers would be riding by their stores.

With the franchises secured, the company turned again to the problem of the connection between Lawton and Mattawan. Perhaps in jest, the Michigan Central Railroad offered the Dunkley-Williams management the right to build along their right of way from Mattawan to Lawton. Leaving it to them to figure how to get across the Michigan Central tracks without crossing at grade. Approximately half way between these two villages the railroad had built a tunnel under their new right of way for a county road. The traction company made arrangements with the township board to allow them to use this subway for their tracks. It necessitated two sharp turns and required that the cars stop before passing under the tracks. The conductor then must go ahead and flag any vehicular traffic, before the car could proceed.⁸

The promise that the hum of electric cars would be heard in "beautiful Paw Paw" seemed at last to be realized. However the Kalamazoo common council had some new faces and they were not satisfied with the franchise granted to the Kalamazoo, Lake Shore and Chicago Traction. Despite the signatures of well over four hundred Kalamazoo citizens, who felt the line would be a good thing for the city, the council cancelled the franchise. The new franchise offered the traction people was so loaded with objectionable features that it was refused. The management insisted it gave them a black eye. Mayor Albert May Todd was against the granting of any franchise without a tax clause to the city and gave the press a denunciation for siding with the traction interest. The issue became so bitter that it was even suggested that a special election be held so the entire city could vote on the rejection of this franchise. The mayor and aldermen signed a statement "Reasons for Franchise Taxation" and listed all reasons for the tax in the local papers. "When the traction says they can't come into the city with such a tax, it's just a bluff", one of the arguments stated.

⁸Thomas D. Brock, "Paw Paw Versus the Railroads," in *Michigan History*, 175 (June, 1955).

About the middle of December, 1905, the Kalamazoo, Lake Shore and Chicago Traction announced the purchase of a steam suburban train from the East, and stated service would start over the line in January. As soon as the city saw fit to grant them a franchise the line would be converted to electricity.

Perhaps as an election concession, a franchise was offered the Dunkley-Williams interest over the W. Main Street car line to Park Street and then it granted them the right to build their own trackage and loop to the site of their proposed terminal on Rose Street. As the management still wanted to parallel the Michigan Central to Eleanor Street and come into the city that way, this was refused. They also felt that the city's tax of \$1.00 the first five years, \$500 for the next ten years, and then \$1,000 a year for the remaining years of the franchise was too high for the use of this route.

May 3, 1906, temporary service was begun from Kalamazoo to Paw Paw over the Kalamazoo, Lake Shore and Chicago Traction, using their new steam power. Trains were scheduled to leave Kalamazoo at 7:00 A.M.; 11:00 A.M. and 3:45 P.M., and to return at 9:45 A.M.; 2:45 P.M. and 6:05 P.M. The depot was at Michigan Avenue and the Michigan Central Railroad Tracks. Stops were made at Asylum, Colony Farm, Oshtemo, Brighton, Rix, Mattawan, Lawton and Paw Paw. Round trip Fare 50¢.

The scrap continued between the city and the traction for a franchise, and the line continued operations as a steam line. Having offered two franchises and having had them both refused, the city wasn't anxious to offer another. With no franchise the company couldn't sell its bonds, and with little money left construction on the line east of Paw Paw stopped.

Discouraged that it could become an electric line, the name was changed from Kalamazoo, Lake Shore and Chicago Traction Company to Kalamazoo, Lake Shore Railway Company; but it was becoming better known as the "Fruit Belt Line."

The Pere Marquette Railroad Company was still in control of the South Haven and Eastern Railroad. As the South Haven and Eastern section was losing money the company was glad to lease it to the Fruit Belt Line for \$20,000 a year. Not needing two lines between Paw Paw and Lawton, the old Calico Grade was torn up

and the rails used to build a spur to Paw Paw Lake. The line in Kalamazoo was to be extended parallel with the Michigan Central Railroad to a new depot at W. Main Street. Here the trains could be met by the street cars on the W. Main street car line, giving much better service than at the old depot. With a line from Kalamazoo to South Haven, electrification of the line was planned, using a third-rail system. It was expected that it would become a serious competitor to the South Haven Branch of the Michigan Central Railroad.

Although the Michigan Central Railroad had been very cooperative near Mattawan with the Fruit Belt Line, they would not allow the line to connect with their line in Kalamazoo. Without such a connection, there could be no interchange of freight, and the line could be nothing more than a package freight line in less than car-load lots. Business fell off, and finally the line was leased to the Michigan United Railways for a five year period. There was also talk of electrifying the line, which would give them a line from Jackson to South Haven.

Another company of the early 1900's, the Kalamazoo and Lake Shore Traction, so similar in name to the Kalamazoo, Lake Shore and Chicago Traction, proposed to build from Kalamazoo to St. Joseph. The route was to go by way of Watervliet and would include an extension from St. Joseph to Saugatuck.

A franchise was requested from the city for a right of way from the Michigan Central Railroad on Lovell Street, thence east on Lovell Street to Henrietta, north on Henrietta Street to South Street, east on South Street to Pitcher Street, north on Pitcher Street to Kalamazoo Avenue, west on Kalamazoo Avenue to Rose Street, south on Rose Street to Lovell Street, forming a terminal loop.

An alternate entrance was requested at a point just west of the line of the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad, thence in a northerly direction to the junction of Vine and Jasper Streets, north on Jasper Street to Lovell Street, west on Lovell Street to Henrietta, connecting with the terminal loop of the first mentioned request.

The promoters also planned on building a line south through Schoolcraft and Three Rivers and then on to Elkhart, Indiana. A line through Hastings to Lansing and then on to Saginaw was also

planned. If Patterson's line, the Kalamazoo Valley Line to Grand Rapids, fell through, the management stated they would like to build this line.

Kalamazoo would be the pivot point for this great system, and it would employ from twelve hundred to fifteen hundred employees throughout the system. Power was to be acquired from steam generators, not water, and this plant alone would cost \$400,000. The car barns were to be 450 by 250 and hold 75 cars. The cost of the building was estimated at \$75,000. Eighty-five cars were to be purchased for the system, 16 passenger and 30 passenger trailers, 3 freight, 25 express, one plow, and one wrecker.

N. A. Stewart was to be chief engineer of the system, G. A. Mullens promotor of the company announced. He had decided that the line would use the double trolley system. Four 75 horsepower motors would allow speeds up to sixty miles per hour. A feature would be that each car would have a telephone and every fifth pole a drop cord connection. The cars would be sixty-four feet long with separate smoking and toilet facilities.

The Michigan Traction agreed to build tracks for the Mullens interest anywhere in the city, if they could also use them. This was refused by Mullens, as he wanted his own tracks. He was ready to start construction of twenty-eight miles between Benton Harbor and South Haven, and as soon as he received the franchise in Kalamazoo, work would be started in that direction.

The granting of a franchise to the Kalamazoo and Lake Shore Traction Company became a warm issue in the common council meeting. A limited franchise was offered, if Mullens would come into the city over the lines of the Michigan Traction Company. The request of a franchise on Lovell Street was denied. Mullens angrily questioned how he could be expected to run his cars on the city lines, when that company had already said they couldn't run their own cars on Main Street. "If they won't hold their cars, how do you expect them to hold mine?" Then he insisted he would build his line in spite of this treatment by the city.

Other promotors, in 1904 and 1905, with their plans and routes, were constantly appearing before the common council. The Kalamazoo and Lake Michigan was planned by Dr. W. A. Baker. His line was to be built from Benton Harbor to South Haven via

Coloma, Paw Paw Lake, and Covert. From Coloma a line to Kalamazoo through Watervliet, Hartford, Lawrence, Paw Paw, and Mattawan would be built. Baker proudly announced that his cars would be forty feet long and geared to a speed of forty-five miles per hour.

The Western Engineering and Construction Company planned a line from St. Joseph to Kalamazoo, featuring a third-rail system.

The Kalamazoo to South Haven, Allegan and Grand Rapids line was proposed by a Chicago interest. M. Meek, president; Luke Coney Jr., treasurer; W. L. Barnum, secretary; still couldn't decide if their line would be steam or electric. Mr. Meek held valuable patents and improvements in motive power, which they had tested and found superior to anything so far known.

The Chicago and Southern Michigan Railway was proposed by D. L. Brown and Alvin P. Cady; H. D. Beer; S. M. Chandler; Ed Stevens; Andrew H. Bean and Louise Bean, all of Benton Harbor. The line was to run along the east shore of Lake Michigan near Benton Harbor to a point in Van Buren County, where one line would connect with Kalamazoo through Paw Paw and a branch go south to Dowagiac and Cassopolis.

Harris Holland, president of The Holland Palace Car Company and the Columbia, Grasley and Richmond Traction, talked at one time of building a line from Niles to Cassopolis, Diamond Lake, and Kalamazoo.

A Benton Harbor to Kalamazoo line was assured by D. H. Patterson and J. J. Johnson. It was almost identical to an earlier line proposed by a Mr. McMichael.

Local Kalamazoo papers were wondering who Fred Bennett was, as it was rumored he wanted to build a line from Paw Paw to Kalamazoo and then points south and west. A short time before a Niles paper had asked who the Chapin interests were. They were planning a route from Niles to Grand Rapids. They had two routes in mind: one through Kalamazoo, the other along the lake shore.

Early in 1910, the Uncle Sam Oil Company asked for a franchise for an electric line to go through Paw Paw from Benton Harbor and east as far as Mattawan. At a speech before a citizens meeting in Paw Paw, S. B. Downer, of The Chicago, Michigan

and Indiana Electric Company, said that a line from Kalamazoo to Benton Harbor, via Paw Paw, Decatur, Keeler, and Sister Lakes would be running by October, 1910. He also told the men that the line of the Uncle Sam Oil Company, running from Benton Harbor to Kalamazoo via Hartford, Lawrence, and Paw Paw was a sure go.

Kalamazoo, an important link in the electric railway development from the east and to the north and west, received countless requests for franchises from lines to the south. Apparently the council was getting a little tired of these promoters and began a new get-tough policy.

One of the first, in March, 1902, was Dr. F. W. Stewart, promoter of the Michigan Hydraulic and Electric. It was to run from Elkhart through Bristol, Mottville, White Pigeon, Constantine, Three Rivers, Schoolcraft, to Kalamazoo. At Schoolcraft, a spur line was to connect Battle Creek by way of Vicksburg. Later a branch to Sturgis might also be built. In Kalamazoo the line would enter the city on South West (now Westnedge) Street, east on Balch Street to South Park and south on Park Street to West Main. An alternate route was to leave this routing at the corner of West South and Park Streets, and go east on South Street to South Rose Street and north on Rose Street to the Michigan Central Railroad tracks.

By the middle of March, this line, The Michigan Hydraulic and Electric and another, The Detroit, Jackson and Chicago line were both petitioning the council at Three Rivers for a franchise. Both advised they would come into that city by way of Kalamazoo.

With the granting of the franchise to the Detroit, Jackson and Chicago line, Dr. Stewart angrily declared that it was nothing but "a railroad obstruction company." He felt they had no intention of building a line and applied for the franchise only to keep his line out.

A change of route now being necessary, Stewart said he would run from Kalamazoo to Vicksburg, then join his line from Battle Creek, go south to Three Rivers, Constantine, White Pigeon, west to Mottville, and then through Bristol to Elkhart. This would bypass Schoolcraft.

By the end of the same month, a dispute developed at the Elkhart commission meeting over the requests for franchises for two electric lines between Elkhart and Kalamazoo. One of the promoters was Dr. Stewart of the Michigan Hydraulic and Electric. The promoter of the second line, the Detroit, Jackson and Chicago, was Lawyer H. P. Stewart of Coldwater.

The village of Constantine granted a franchise to the Detroit and Chicago line, declaring it was not an exclusive one. The Kalamazoo common council was not so easy, and a verbal fight over the franchise developed between the promoters of the two electric lines.

In September, 1902, the entire right of way from Kalamazoo to Elkhart was secured by Dr. F. W. Stewart of the Michigan Hydraulic and Electric; but when the franchise ordinance was brought up at the council meeting for consideration, Dr. Stewart informed the aldermen he didn't want to deposit a certified check of good faith.

Alderman Jacob Levy exploded a bomb shell at the October meeting when he told that Dr. Stewart had offered him a bribe of \$25 cash. This was to be paid if Levy would attend a special meeting of the council and vote favorably on the granting of a franchise to Stewart.

With the failure of Dr. Stewart to deposit a check of \$9,250 for his share in the paving of the streets on which his line was to operate, the franchise expired and ended Stewart's attempts for an electric line.

The new year of 1906 brought the announcement of another new electric line connecting Kalamazoo with the south. It was to bear the name of The Kalamazoo, Elkhart and South Bend, and was capitalized in the amount of \$55,000. While this was a small amount, it was enough to secure a franchise in Kalamazoo for the proposed line. It was a revival of an earlier electric line, which had fallen through. The officials were Adelbert D. Harris, president; H. C. Morgan, vice president; Adam Hunsberger, treasurer; and John A. Bowman, auditor. Edward Vincent of Kalamazoo was to be secretary.

The route was from Kalamazoo to Vicksburg, Parkville, Three Rivers, Constantine, Mottville, Union, Elkhart, and South Bend. Engineers were to start work at once surveying the route, all of which would be on private right of way.

When the officials appeared before the council, they were told they could have the franchise if they came into the city over the tracks of the Michigan Traction lines. Harris remarked, that they would only consent to a private right of way with an independent terminal. If this wasn't granted, they would switch off at Vicksburg, go to Battle Creek, and by-pass Kalamazoo entirely.

Harris wanted to come into the city along Cameron Street to Reed Street, then to Jasper and Jackson, then along the right of way of the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad to Vine Street, west on Vine to Jasper, then to Lovell, Burdick, South and Henrietta. The last three streets would form a loop.

City officials turned down this request, informing him that one of the stumbling blocks was that the firm's general offices were to be located in South Bend. As with Pattersons' Grand Rapids line, the city wanted the offices in Kalamazoo so they could have the benefit of the taxes.

Eventually three routes were offered: one over the Portage Street city line of the Michigan Traction; the second, along Cameron, Reed, James, Jackson, Vine, and Burdick; and the third, along Cameron, Reed, James, Vine Streets, the "old tail race," and Pitcher Street to South Street, thence to Edwards Street.

In the spring of 1906, Republican Mayor Walter R. Taylor proposed a loop line for the use of all interurban lines planning on entering Kalamazoo. It was to be built on Rose Street, Kalamazoo Avenue, Edwards Street, and South Street. It was hoped that it would put an end to the countless requests for franchises with private right of ways in the city. It would also provide the city with a one-half cent tax on each passenger carried over the loop. The third route offered to the Kalamazoo, Elkhart and South Bend would touch this proposed loop and if the company did select this route, they were offered the right by the city to build the loop.

Mayor Taylor was running for re-election that spring and his loop became a plank in his electioneering platform. The mayor stated he would "Encourage interurbans by a universal loop, going to all parts of the business district, so that all may have equal and adequate terminal facilities."⁹

Many of the business men in the city were at odds with the

⁹Kalamazoo *Evening Telegraph*, March 24, 1906.

council for its refusal to the Kalamazoo, Lake Shore and Chicago, or Fruit Belt Line, of its franchise request on Eleanor Street. Taylor may have felt that such an appeal to the people, would help in his election.

The election for mayor that year between Mayor Taylor and the Democratic candidate, William Thompson, became a fight on almost the single issue of the interurban franchises. A cartoon of this period showed Mayor Taylor receiving the taxes of the Kalamazoo, Elkhart and South Bend; The Kalamazoo, Gull Lake and Northern; and other proposed lines over his proposed loop. Democratic candidate Thompson in this same cartoon is shown inviting the Fruit Belt Line and Mr. Dunkley, encouraged by Mr. Rowe of the Democratic Kalamazoo *Gazette*, to come into the city on a different route without taxes.

About this same time in March, 1906, the village of Richland held a mass meeting to promote interest in building an electric line from Kalamazoo to Grand Rapids. Rumors had been heard of a proposed line from Kalamazoo to Grand Rapids via Hickory Corners and it was felt that the village should do everything in its power to encourage this line.

They were also flirting with the Michigan Traction line, hoping to encourage their plan of extending that line from Yorkville to Richland and then along the Gull Road to Kalamazoo.

Within a few weeks after this meeting, William V. Jacobs of Chicago and Dr. James T. Upjohn of Kalamazoo announced the formation of a traction corporation, to be known as the Kalamazoo, Gull Lake and Northern. It would be built through to Grand Rapids, tapping the route already being promoted to connect Grand Rapids and Battle Creek. If the city saw fit to grant them a franchise, they would like the privilege of building the Taylor loop.

The election in the meanwhile between Thompson and Taylor became very heated. School children practiced electioneering with the interurban problem the debating topic. Taylor was defeated and the new council granted the building of the Taylor Loop to the Kalamazoo, Gull Lake and Northern.

Jacobs deposited a \$1,000 mortgage with the register of deeds, listing the State Bank of Chicago as trustee. The track still on Edwards Street was laid by the city in 1906, when that street was

bricked. In starting the building of the loop, this traction company would have practical control of all terminal facilities of any other incoming interurban.

Stringency of the money market was the reason given by Colonel Jacobs for asking for an extension of three years in his franchise. The original had been granted July 2, 1906. It provided that nine miles were to be laid by May 1, 1908. Three blocks had been built on Edwards and Rose Streets by the city for the company when these streets were bricked. Work bills of \$2,500 had been presented by this time to Jacobs, but had not been paid. The Colonel stated everything would be taken care of. Considerable grading had been done on his line at the Richland end, and he promised that cars would be running over a portion of the road by at least the end of 1908.

The question of the franchise issued to Colonel Jacobs was brought up at the council meeting of February 11, 1910. After considerable discussion as to the delays, it was decided that the city would take over the tracks on Rose and Edwards Streets, if nothing was done by the extended date of May 1, 1910. Even with the loss of the franchise the mayor hoped the line could be built and the city paid the \$2,500.79 it still had coming for the labor of laying the rails on Edwards and Rose Streets.

Colonel Jacobs once again appeared before the council late in August, 1910, asking for another extension of his franchise. He felt that he had some London capital interested, and with this money he could build his line. If the franchise was extended, the money from London was almost assured and then work could begin at once. After some discussion it was decided by the council in October, 1910, that no extension would be granted as long as the \$2,500.79 was owed to the city. Jacobs pleaded for one more chance, but Alderman Verburg felt that the city had given him enough time. Jacobs then told about an offer of \$50,000 he had been tendered by some Eastern capitalists. They were very much against the idea of municipal ownership of a loop and the precedent it might establish. They didn't want to build his line, only kill the situation it might start, and were willing to pay this money to stop it.

The council didn't think there was much truth in this story and told Jacobs that if he didn't pay the \$2,500.79 he owed the

city, they would file suit to collect it. Jacobs countered by telling them he didn't owe the money. This work, he explained, had been done by a previous council, so as not to interfere with the paving afterwards, and was not his responsibility.

Thus matters rested, although the council still hoped the line would be built and they would receive their money. To keep the chance of a renewal of this franchise alive, it was considered when plans for a new bridge over the river on Gull Road were drawn up. The council didn't want to go to the expense of strengthening the bridge enough to allow for the electric cars, if this line was built. So the bridge was built as far to the north side of the street as possible. Then if Jacobs did build his line, he could build his own bridge on the south side of this new bridge. If the railway wasn't built, and traffic ever warranted it, a second bridge could be built beside the first. Today this bridge is still there, making a jog in the road, all because of the Kalamazoo, Gull Lake and Northern Railway.

George Bardeen, of Otsego, formerly interested in the Kalamazoo, Lake Shore and Chicago Traction, decided about this time to build an electric line from Otsego to Kalamazoo. The problems between Jacobs and the council were at their height and none of the aldermen were very receptive to the granting of any more traction franchises, especially while the other matter was still unsettled.

With the apparent forfeit of the Kalamazoo, Gull Lake and Northern franchise, interest during the latter months of 1910 and early 1911 was centered on Bardeen and his proposed line. The route suggested was from the northern city limits over Pitcher Street to Patterson Street, thence south on Porter Street to Water and west on Water to Rose. Compensation to the city was discussed and then it was suggested that it might be a good idea to allow the line to use the Taylor Loop. If so they could come up Water Street in place of Kalamazoo Avenue.

Among the items in the franchise provision, was the clause that Bardeen would pay the city \$200 a year for the use of the streets. The articles were contained in twenty closely typed pages and had fifty-three sections. Of note were the facts that the line must be operated by electricity the first five years, and that the franchise couldn't be assigned to any paralleling or competing line.

The franchise was rejected by Harry Howard, attorney for Bardeen, as containing too many sections and things they must do. Although the city had wanted a payment for the franchise of \$200 a year and one-half cent per passenger, it was finally decided that no compensation would be required for the first ten years. After that the fare would be fixed by the council. With these concessions it was hoped that the franchise would be acceptable to Bardeen and the line built.

The Kalamazoo Citizens League came out in opposition to the granting of this franchise to Bardeen. The spokesman, A. M. Todd, stated his organization was in favor of the city building the line and having it owned by the city. If the city would construct the tracks, and they remained the property of the city, he would donate \$1,000. City Attorney Marvin Schaberg informed the council that under the present city charter the city couldn't own the tracks. The Citizens League had to be content with going on record as being opposed to the granting of the Bardeen franchise.

The matter of an acceptable franchise was left up to the council by Bardeen. An amendment was added at the council meeting that if the franchise was granted it would expire on February 13, 1913, when the Michigan United Electric franchise expired. After some bitter discussion this amendment finally lost, and the franchise was ready to be submitted at the election in April, 1911. It was felt that the election might have an extra interest, as women would be allowed to vote.

The franchise passed in the election, but the interurban interests were not certain if in its granting the line could be built. The terms of the charter made it very difficult to sell the bonds. Apparently the bonds didn't sell and construction was never started for in the summer of 1911 a new line was announced. It was the Michigan Chicago Westbound Company with Bardeen, Dee Allen, and Glen Allen among those interested.

The Michigan United Railways, the successors to the Michigan Traction, began at once, (February, 1906) the task they had promised the public. New limited cars were ordered, which necessitated the lowering again of the tracks under the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad. These new cars would seat forty-six passengers and were forty-five feet long. Through service to Jackson was

offered, but at the same time, cars would no longer stop at all crossings or farm houses. Posts were to be marked for the stops and the plan was to go into effect in all but Ross Township. The franchise there stated that stops must be made on signal.

The new service proved successful and within a short time the Michigan Central Railroad cut its rates in order to compete with this competition.

Again the interurban became a controversial subject in a Kalamazoo mayor's election. The traction company asked that their present franchise, which had sixteen and one-half years to run, be scrapped. Instead they wanted one for thirty years; then they could sell new bonds, and promised increased service and improvements if the request was granted.

Mayor Thompson was in favor of such a concession, as he understood that if it was granted, one of the improvements would be a subway under the Michigan Central Railroad at North Rose Street. He felt that the interurban was of great value to the city, and everything possible should be done to encourage the line and any of the many other lines which had asked for franchises.

Twenty-nine articles were listed by the council as requirements of the Michigan United Railways before a franchise could be granted. Requirement No. 14 stated: "As interurbans are absolutely necessary for growth of cities it is necessary for the local company to be obligated to make fair and suitable terms with any other interurban line desiring an entrance into the city;" No. 24, "Fair and equitable arrangements for use of tracks by all interurban compromise;" No. 25, "Interurbans should be required to operate in the city over the tracks of local lines as city council and interurbans may desire;" No. 26, "Local compromise shall have right over other interurban tracks in city."¹⁰

The Michigan United Railway said they still wanted the thirty-year franchise, but thought some of the twenty-four demands of the council would have to be modified.

The franchise became a bigger issue in the forthcoming elections, and it was soon apparent that there were a great many people in the city, as well as on the council, who didn't agree with the mayor's views on the granting of a franchise for a thirty-year period. The

¹⁰Kalamazoo *Evening Telegraph*, January 23, 1907.

Kalamazoo *Evening and Saturday Telegraph* (March 26, 1907) again took up the fight against Mayor Thompson. They told that he was elected on a platform which called for free interurbans. "What has he done in this direction? Nothing." "His political organ prides itself on what he has done to obstruct the development of electric interurbans." "He is doing the city a lot of harm."

The election in 1907 again was in favor of Mayor Thompson, who defeated his Republican opponent, J. Ezra White, 2,900 to 2,471.

The thirty-year franchise was granted and within a short time the new limited interurban service from Kalamazoo to Jackson began. Very fast time was made. Only five stops were made for the entire trip, which took only two hours and thirty minutes for the entire run.

Requests were then made for an increase in fares; as the management stated there was no profit in the present rates. To soften the blow of this increase, the local papers the same day carried the story that the Michigan United Railways, through cooperation with the Detroit United Railways, would run two cars daily between Kalamazoo and Detroit.

With the floating of the bond issue, the importance of Kalamazoo as an interurban center was recognized. The Detroit United Railways had 705 miles in operation and was connected with the Michigan United Railways at Jackson. The Michigan United Railways had 160 miles and the two Grand Rapids lines 183 miles. A connecting line between Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo had been proposed by several different companies, so when connected, service could be extended throughout the state. The capital investment was \$38,000,000. The number of passengers carried was 222,788,795.¹¹ Vice president Clarke stated that the Michigan United Railways would either build or assist in building a new line to Benton Harbor or South Haven. Assistance would be offered any of the promoters trying to build the Grand Rapids to Kalamazoo line. In July, 1908, the profit of the Michigan United Railways was announced as being \$514,883.62, and of this \$61,000 would be spent to re-equip the entire road.

¹¹Kalamazoo *Evening Telegraph*, May 15, 1908.

Early in 1909 another fare increase was announced by Superintendent James L. Millspaugh on the portion of the Michigan United Railways between Battle Creek and Kalamazoo. The fare from Comstock to Kalamazoo was to be increased from fifteen cents to twenty cents. The fare from Comstock to Galesburg was to be increased from fifteen to twenty cents, with a round trip fare of forty cents. Galesburg to Augusta would have a new rate of thirty cents and from Augusta to Battle Creek, twenty cents. Coupon books, Comstock to Kalamazoo, good for fifty-two rides were offered for \$2.60; Galesburg to Kalamazoo, fifty-two rides were offered for \$5.20. These were to be good only for the month issued and if the book holder did not use them he would lose his rides. It was felt that many of the people who had moved to the Comstock area, would have to move back into the city.

Immediately the local papers launched stories in opposition to the increase. It was noted that the increase was to take place only between Kalamazoo and Battle Creek. Millspaugh had stated the money was needed to improve this part of the line and nothing could be done to stop this increase. The papers insisted that when the line was originally built, it was built to last only twenty years and now the public was being asked to pay for the poor construction and mismanagement of the line. Citizens were asked to boycott the line out of existence. The *Augusta Beacon* stated they would follow suit and also boycott the service. They felt the roadbed was like an old wooden sidewalk, with every other plank missing. "The line has misrepresented themselves. They say they are public benefactors and then don't even live up to their franchise." Galesburg was also fighting mad at the Michigan United Railways. They not only began a boycott of the company, but insisted they had to put in T rails on the village streets, as stated in their franchise.

The Michigan United Railways city streetcar lines had also announced a rate of increase at this time and the city decided to boycott both interurban and city service.

Augusta papers indicated the feeling of the people when they rejoiced in the wrecking of a limited interurban in their village. The Michigan United Railways lost a court case in Ross Township, and admitted they had violated their franchise. The city of Marshall was also riled. Under a new schedule, two cars had

been taken out of service and theater goers had to wait in Battle Creek until 3:30 A.M. to get a car back home.

The seriousness was apparent when President M. W. Mills and Secretary Moore of the Michigan United Railways were called to London to confer with the bondholders. The Englishmen were alarmed at the publicity given to "The Milk Can Route," as it was now being called. Concern was also felt over the vast sums they had invested and the obligations they would assume in the building of an interurban line from Kalamazoo to Lake Michigan.

The Kalamazoo common council decided to hold a special meeting regarding the Michigan United Railways question. "The interurban question has a chance of settlement before the discussion of the city service," the local papers stated. However when the meeting was called, Colonel Edwin M. Irish, who had been retained by the city, wasn't ready and Manager J. P. Clarke of the traction company went home, postponing the meeting.

Mayor [Frank H.] Milham said that he understood Colonel Irish was determined to know everything there was to know about the city's dealings with the Michigan United Railways before going into a conference with Manager Clarke. Their franchise had been amended five or six times and a long series of resolutions that may affect the relation between public and company is on record in the minutes of the council. The mayor is satisfied that the thing to do is to make a thorough preparation before the council shall deal with the company.¹²

The majority of the council members appeared to favor action at the earliest possible moment and the delay of one week between regular council meetings might easily prove the limit of their patience. Resolutions ordering the company to stop running its freight cars into the city and ordering the stopping of interurban cars at all street crossings was one suggestion as to what the council might do to the Michigan Traction. The city lines must reinstate their former rates and make service on both the interurban and local cars convenient for the working man. Finally an ultimatum was given. "Be good or get out." When this failed, Mayor Frank H. Milham instructed city attorney, William Fitzgerald, to go after them. A twenty-three section ordinance was adopted by the council, without a dissenting vote. Most of the sections concerned the city lines.

¹²Kalamazoo Gazette, February 6, 1909.

The Michigan United Railways answered by telling the city it wouldn't be bound by this new ordinance. To the surprise of the council, it was discovered that a clause in the Compton Railroad Bill prevented the city from enforcing the ordinance.

The city then carried their accusations of the Michigan United Railways before the Michigan Railroad Commission, with their charges against "The Milk Can Route." Warrants for the arrest of General Manager Clarke and General Superintendent Millspaugh of the Michigan United Railways were asked. One warrant was issued against Clarke and two against Millspaugh. They were charged with flagrant violations of the city ordinance relative to car service in Kalamazoo. It was noticed that with the issuing of these warrants, service noticeably improved.

Edwards and Chamberlain, local hardware merchants, at the corner of East Main and Portage Streets, asked that something be done to stop the constant switching of the interurbans at that corner. As a solution the Michigan United Railways asked permission of the council to build a loop line on East South Street. This would enable them to turn their cars around and eliminate the switching at the corner of Main and Portage.

The city was in no mood to grant any concession, and instead served them with an injunction. It prevented them from running their cars into the city. Instead they had to stop at the car barns on Washington Avenue. Passengers then had to board a special car for downtown, and a five cents extra fare would be charged any passenger who didn't take this special car. The injunction was to remain in force until the interurban company stopped switching its cars at Portage and Main.

In an effort to appease the city, the unpopular Millspaugh was transferred, and the new superintendent, B. F. O'Mara, began at once to find out why Kalamazoo was so displeased with the Michigan United Railways. City Attorney Fitzgerald said he would show them by announcing he was going to bring them to book. The traction company appealed to the State Supreme Court for a solution. The case was won by the railway and they at once started to work out a solution of the complaint of the switching at Main and Portage.

Service into the city was restored over the interurban after a lapse of 79 days, and greeted by shouts of joy by the Michigan United Railways. The company then told the papers they had purchased a strip of land just off West Michigan Avenue, north of Academy Street and abutting the Fruit Belt Line on the west. Interurbans were to run up West Main Street and loop around for the return. This would give good connections with the railroad and also solve the switching problem. It wasn't long before Kalamazoo discovered the real reason for the purchase: the Michigan United Railways had offered to buy the Fruit Belt Line. At that time it was under lease from the Michigan Central Railroad and the Pere Marquette Railroad. It was felt that the Michigan Central Railroad would sell, but it wasn't certain just what the reactions of the Pere Marquette Railroad might be. About the same time a request for a franchise for the Michigan United Railways in Detroit was requested, showing the future plans of the railway both toward the east and the west.

The people of Kalamazoo now took a different view of the Michigan United Railways, especially when adjustments between the city and the traction people over the differences for the past two years were announced as being ready to be worked out. The controversy had become a continuous affair and so mixed up in politics that the people were tired and disgusted with the whole affair and anxious that a settlement be made at once. At last the case was settled and new improvements were promised. The agreement was accepted, the indebtedness of the traction company was paid, and the long controversy was over.

April 20, 1911, The Fruit Belt Line was leased to the Michigan United Railway for five years. The line was to have the third-rail system installed, and it was hoped that it could be in operation the following year. With the connection of the Fruit Belt Line at Paw Paw Lake with the Benton Harbor Electric Traction, service could be given through to Benton Harbor. The Michigan United Railways also was negotiating for the purchase of the Detroit United Railway System; it then could give service across the state. An extension to Saginaw was also planned.

These extensions seemed but part of the possibilities, when a

story was released in the Kalamazoo *Telegraph Press* of November 15, 1911, that the Michigan United Railways had been absorbed by the Commonwealth Power Railway and Light Company. This company was held by the Hodenpyl Company of New York, the Clarke interest of Philadelphia, and the Foote interest of Jackson, Michigan. Their attorneys asked permission to issue bonds for construction of a line to Grand Rapids and to electrify the Fruit Belt Line. They also acquired some interest in the Grand Rapids, Grand Haven and Muskegon, as well as the Grand Rapids, Holland and Chicago. A connecting link between Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids was a necessity to unite these interests.

The railroad commission allowed the issue of the new bonds. After they learned that a clause in the state law prohibited the use of any of the money to electrify the Fruit Belt or build any extensions, a new company had to be formed to absorb the Michigan United Railways and build the new Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo line. It was to be called the Central Traction, but it would only be the Michigan United Railways under a different name.

Expansion was continued by outright purchase of the Grand Rapids, Holland and Lake Michigan, with the plan of extending the Saugatuck branch to South Haven and connecting with the Fruit Belt. This would give direct service with all Michigan United Railways lines to Grand Rapids. The Lansing-Owosso and Owosso-Corunna interurban lines were also taken over. The Clarke interest was trying to get full control of the entire system. Already holding the Grand Rapids, Saginaw and Bay City street railway systems, these new acquisitions would give them control of the major interurban and street railway systems of the entire state.

With the conclusion of these purchases, a complete reorganization of the Michigan United Railways took place and it became the Michigan United Traction Company.¹³

The first result of this reorganization was the formation of the Michigan Railway Construction Company. Organized with a \$50,000 capital, its articles of incorporation stated it was to take over the construction and all repairs for the Michigan United Traction, as well as repairs of buildings and terminals of the rail-

¹³Kalamazoo *Telegraph Press*, January 18, 1912.

way. First items on its agenda would be the electrifying of the Fruit Belt Line and the building of a new railway to Grand Rapids.

Rumors once again were heard on the streets of Kalamazoo that a line to Grand Rapids would be built. The failures of Prosser, Patterson, Dudley Waters, D. W. Kaufman, George T. Bishop, Dr. H. F. Thomas, The Spitzer Brothers of Toledo, Eli Nickols, and A. S. White could still be remembered.

Colonel James Boyton had been the last, and had promised a direct line not only from Grand Rapids to Kalamazoo but to Battle Creek, Coldwater, and Toledo. John Burke, president of the Kalamazoo Commercial Club, suggested the promotion of a line to Otsego. This would be almost the same route as proposed by the Michigan and Chicago Westbound Railway Company, who had acquired the franchise rights of Colonel Boyton.¹⁴ "Build a line to Otsego," said Burke, "and private capital will extend it to Grand Rapids, and then Kalamazoo will become the Indianapolis of Michigan."¹⁵

Improvements over the Michigan United Traction continued. Inspection was again made of the Fruit Belt Line to see how it could best be electrified. Surveys were made for an all new route to Grand Rapids and when the new management announced the purchase of the Shakespeare Building at the corner of Rose and Water Streets, for \$75,000 cash, it began to suddenly look as if at long last a line to Grand Rapids would be built.

With so much going out for extensions and new terminal facilities, some of the smaller improvements were delayed. The village of Augusta had tried for some time to get the traction company to share in the cost of a badly needed new bridge over the mill race in the center of town. No agreement could be reached on how much each should pay, so the village built two new bridges, one on either side of the old bridge, and left the traction company to figure out for itself what it wanted to do with that improvement.

Hopes for Kalamazoo becoming an Indianapolis of Michigan grew when John E. Collins, vice president and general manager of the Michigan United Traction Company and president of the Toledo and Western Railway released a news story. The Toledo

¹⁴Kalamazoo *Evening Telegraph*, July 31, August 30, 1908.

¹⁵Kalamazoo *Telegraph Press*, January 25, 1912.

and Western would build a new line from Adrian to Jackson, connecting with the Michigan United Traction and thus forming a connection through to Kalamazoo.

The Michigan and Indiana stated they had acquired all necessary right of ways for their line from Coldwater to Battle Creek and it was to be in operation by the summer of 1913. This would give the Michigan United Traction another connection to the south. Better freight service was now put in operation and the line continued to grow in popularity.

The people, now so certain that Kalamazoo was really going to be a great interurban center, were greatly disturbed to read in the papers in August, 1912, that Mayor George Ellis of Grand Rapids appeared to be doing nothing to encourage the new Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo electric line. The company had been trying to obtain terminal facilities in that city, and the mayor would not even see their representatives. Once again it appeared that the long hoped for Grand Rapids to Kalamazoo electric line was to fail.

Headlines of the Kalamazoo *Telegraph Press* on August 26, 1912, released the story that contracts had been let for the building of the long awaited Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo electric railway. It was to be an air line route from Grand Rapids via Wayland, Bradley, Shelbyville, Martin, Monteith, Plainwell, Cooper Station, and Kalamazoo. Ross Station and Moline were but a short distance to the west of this air line route.

The definite route, especially from Plainwell to Kalamazoo, had not been selected and wouldn't be until the entire route was acquired. This would avoid the raising of real estate values and any bitterness that might arise over condemnations. Work was to start at Martin toward the north within a week.

The name Michigan and Chicago Westbound, that had formally been used in acquiring many of the franchises, was changed to the Michigan and Chicago Railway Company. H. H. Crowell of Grand Rapids was named president. The Michigan Railway Engineering Company of Kalamazoo was to build the line.

Arrangements had been made for terminal facilities at Grand Rapids. The line would enter the city at Frank Street, just south of Pearl Street. Freight facilities would be along the river from Pearl Street north to the Star Mills.

By late September four hundred teams and three steam shovels were at work building the roadbed near Martin. It was hoped that this could be completed before the ground froze, and then it could settle during the winter. Grading was being done, so that as soon as business warranted it the route could be double tracked.

With construction well under way the builders announced they would also build a line from St. Joseph, connecting with the Michigan City, Lakeside and St. Joseph Electric, a new line that was to start construction within a short time.

It would be another link in the long proposed Detroit to Chicago Electric. The Michigan link would go from Kalamazoo through Paw Paw, Lawrence, Hartford, Watervliet, Coloma, and then into Benton Harbor, and St. Joseph. With this news it wasn't long before Allegan began to ask how they could be connected with this new route. They were still sorry that the main line of the Michigan and Chicago Railway wasn't going to come through their city.

Weather conditions began to hamper the construction crews, and with only six miles of grade completed it appeared that construction would have to stop until spring.

To add to the promoters discouragement, a new line released a news story that they would come into Kalamazoo. Their route would be from Toledo to a point on Lake Michigan. It was to be called the Ohio and Michigan and would come from Toledo to Battle Creek, along the east shore of Gull Lake to Richland and then directly to Kalamazoo. From Kalamazoo the line would go in a southwesterly direction through Vicksburg, and Dowagiac to Benton Harbor. The promoters stated they had purchased a piece of land north of the Chicago, Kalamazoo and Saginaw Railroad station on East Main Street and the Kalamazoo Foundry for a depot. Charles W. Post of Battle Creek was announced as one of the men interested in the promotion of this line.¹⁶

At about the same time the Benton Harbor and Paw Paw Lake line stated they might extend that line to Hartford. Later they decided they might even continue to Watervliet.

With a slight break in the weather, work again began in November, 1912, on the Michigan and Chicago Railway. Three hundred

¹⁶Kalamazoo *Telegraph Press*, October 12, 1912.

men and one hundred fifty teams were again busy. Contracts for the rails were let. It was apparent that a race would be on for the completion of any electric line.

The Michigan United Traction still holding a lease on the Fruit Belt Line decided they might change the route of that line, so as to come in on Parkview to the streetcar lines at Oakwood and then into the city in that manner and to the new Union Depot at Rose and Water Streets.

By this time, maps of the proposed route of the Michigan and Chicago Railway from the north corporation line of the city of Kalamazoo, north through Kalamazoo County, Allegan County, and Kent County, to the south city limits of the city of Grand Rapids were approved by the Michigan Railroad Commission.¹⁷ The line would cross the Grand Rapids and Indiana; the Pere Marquette; Michigan Central; Michigan Central—Allegan Branch; Chicago, Kalamazoo and Saginaw; and the Grand Rapids, Holland and Chicago Railway. Grade crossings with interlocking devices were asked for these crossings.

The Otsego Commercial Club started a movement to bring a branch of the new line from Plainwell to Otsego. Allegan began a movement for a new interurban project. A mass meeting was held proposing a line from Holland to connect with the new Kalamazoo-Grand Rapids route. Officials of the Pere Marquette Railroad system visited Allegan in company with officials of the Holland interurban. The logical explanation was that a line would be built from Plainwell to Otsego and then to Allegan. The route could then parallel the Pere Marquette line to Holland.¹⁸

Once again interurban construction was going forward toward Kalamazoo and soon history began to repeat itself. The Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad denied the line the right to cross its tracks in Plainwell at grade. Instead it suggested the traction company build a bridge over their line. Objections were voiced at once by the traction company as it would require approaches of over two thousand feet and necessitate a bridge four thousand feet in length. A branch to Otsego would then be almost impossible. The Mich-

¹⁷Sixth Annual Report of the Michigan Railroad Commission for the Year ending December 31, 1912 (Lansing, 1912).

¹⁸Kalamazoo Gazette, March 23, 1913.

igan Central Railroad fought the crossing of its lines anywhere, and insisted that the traction company come into the city over the already existing streetcar lines.

With two thirds of the grade completed, these obstructions were all that would bar the line from being completed by the summer of 1913, the management believed. "With up to date curves, none exceeding three per cent and grades of only one per cent, we will have a splendid line when we get through," said George L. Erwin, vice president and general manager of the Michigan Railway Engineering Company. To offset the constant threat of new lines and to satisfy both Battle Creek and Allegan interests, the Michigan and Chicago Railway Company purchased from the Michigan Central and Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad Company (stockholders and virtual owners) the part of the old Detroit, Toledo, and Milwaukee Railroad between Battle Creek and Allegan. This railroad intersected the Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo line at Montieith Junction, and would be electrified giving both Allegan and Battle Creek connections with the new electric line.¹⁰ November first was the date set for the opening of this line from Monteith to Battle Creek. The main line was nearing Kalamazoo and the line should be completed within the next twelve months, the management announced. Twenty-six miles of track had been laid and all grading would be completed by August 1, 1913. Ballast was brought over the old steam route to the main line from the quarry at Richland Junction. Twenty-one cars had been ordered for delivery in January and were to be the most costly ever ordered by an electric line. Every sixth tie on the old steam line had been replaced by a longer one to support a third rail and everything should be ready for electrical operation by spring, the company announced. A temporary station was to be located in the present Michigan United Traction Building, as that location was already taxed.

With construction continuing at a rapid rate, it was hoped that the line would be in operation by the summer of 1914. Then the old bugaboo of obstruction began. The Kalamazoo council began to question the advisability of allowing trains of more than one

¹⁰Eighth Annual Report of the Michigan Railroad Commission for the Year ending December 31, 1914 (Lansing, 1915).

car in the downtown area. It was finally decided to allow two cars until 6:00 P.M., unless special permission was granted by the city engineer. Six-car trains would be allowed from 6:15 P.M. until 7:00 P.M. Saturdays only two-car trains would be allowed until 10:00 P.M.

Construction began on a new terminal at Rose and Water Streets. Then the council blocked the plans for this terminal. The management then decided to build a terminal at the corner of Harrison and East Main. A right of way was secured for the Michigan United Traction from Recreation Park to this new site. Thus they would not be forced by the city to give free transfers to the city lines. The terminal construction at Rose and Water Streets was stopped, to the disappointment of businessmen who had felt that with the building of this new terminal the switching of the cars at the corner of Portage and Main would at last stop.

The free transfer question, still unsettled, brought up another question by the mayor. Should the interurban be given the use of Michigan United Traction tracks without paying a rental charge to the city. When he was told that this new interurban line should be encouraged and helped to come into the city, the mayor retorted that it wasn't a new line. It was only the continuation of the Michigan United Traction, that it had the same president as that of the Michigan United Traction, who was president of Commonwealth Power as well.

On Friday evening, October 23, 1914, the transfer question came up before the council. President George L. Erwin of the Michigan Electric Construction Company, which was building the railway, stated that the terminal at Rose and Water Streets was only temporary until they could obtain their own private right of way to a terminal of their own. It would be better than turning the cars around at Portage and Main Streets, however.

The council decided they should ask the people to vote on whether or not the company should be allowed to enter the city with or without a free transfer clause. A rental fee to the city of \$1,500 for the tracks from Main Street to Walter Street for eight years was discussed. Perhaps it was hoped in this way they could recover some of the earlier loss to the city, when the track was originally laid there for the "Taylor Loop" and the Kalamazoo,

Gull Lake and Northern. It was also decided that the terminal must be completed by June 1, 1915, and the switching of the cars at Portage and Main must stop at that date.

A petition signed by many businessmen was presented to the council requesting that the line be allowed to enter the city without the transfer clause and that the terminal be located at Rose and Water. "We believe that interurban development is one of the most important factors in community growth," the petition stated.²⁰

The election admitted the electric line to Kalamazoo with a vote of 3,809 for and 1,819 against. With these obstructions out of the way, the construction of the terminal at Rose and Water began again. The old skating rink adjoining the Shakespeare Building was torn down to provide off-street parking for the cars.

On November 4, 1914, electricity was turned on at 4 o'clock in the morning to permit test runs. Juice on the steam line from Monteith to Battle Creek was to be turned on the following Thursday. Cars would be running over the new line in sixty days if the company plans were not interrupted by lack of materials. Electrification of the line from Monteith to Allegan was being pushed and a right of way downtown was being arranged. The old D.T. & M. station was almost a mile from town, so this would help give much better service.

The bridge for the main line at Grand Rapids was still not completed, but it would not hamper test runs, while it was being finished. Service would begin by the first of 1915. The rails bringing the line into the city had been finished on Harrison Street and the Michigan United Traction lines on East Main Street. The connections at Rose and Main were being completed at night, so as not to interfere with streetcar service. With their completion, freight was received at the new terminal. Service at the old freight house on Portage Street was discontinued and the cause of the traffic blockade there was removed. Passengers were still being received at the Portage Street terminal.

With construction of the passenger facilities at the Rose Street terminal almost completed, it was decided that the line would be

²⁰Kalamazoo Gazette, November 3, 1914.

opened for service on April 1, 1915. Twenty all-steel cars would be in operation. Fifteen would be passenger and five express. Ten cars would be used in local service.

Wednesday, May 5, 1915, newspaper men of Kalamazoo, Grand Rapids, Jackson, and Battle Creek were given an opportunity to inspect the new line. President H. H. Crowell's private car left Grand Rapids at 9:30 A.M. carrying representatives of all Grand Rapids papers to Kalamazoo. Shortly after noon the scribes from Battle Creek, Jackson, and Kalamazoo boarded the luxurious car to dine with President Crowell and make the return trip to Grand Rapids.

The Grand Rapids, Grand Haven and Muskegon planned to cooperate with service over the new line to Muskegon. Tariffs and tickets were prepared offering direct service from any point on either line, and freight was to be handled over the new line directly from Muskegon.

Writers from the *Kalamazoo Gazette* gave a glowing account of their introductory ride on the new electric line, under a headline May 5, 1915, entitled, "Fast Time Made Over New Electric Line." Nearly 47 miles in 42 minutes, was the time made Wednesday afternoon by the Michigan Railway Company special, in carrying the party of newspapermen from Kalamazoo to Grand Rapids.

It was a record time between the two cities and the biggest feature of a delightful day afforded scribes from Grand Rapids, Battle Creek, Jackson, Marshall, Albion, Augusta and Galesburg.

"Note your time," remarked General Manager John F. Collins as the big car rolled out of the Rose Street station, promptly at 2:30 o'clock. It took eight minutes to reach the Kalamazoo city limits, then the motorman opened her up and the fun began. Mile after mile was reeled off at twentieth century speed. There was a slow down at Plainwell, but just for a moment, and then the wild ride resumed. It was 3:20 when the Grand Rapids city limits were reached; the distance between city limits of the two cities being negotiated at an average speed of sixty miles per hour. Ten minutes later the special rolled into the furniture city terminal.

The guests were impressed at the general high-class of the railway especially with the convenient location of the terminal in

both Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo. In each city they were located in the very heart of the business district and near to all the hotels, theatres, and shopping centers.

Regular service was to begin within about two weeks from the inaugural trip. Schedules provided for eighteen cars each way from Kalamazoo to Grand Rapids. Flyers would leave both cities at 9:30 A.M., 1:30 P.M. and 5:30 P.M. They would make the run in one hour and ten minutes. Limited cars would run on the odd half-hours, beginning at 7:30 A.M., while locals would start at 5:30 A.M., and run thereafter on the even one-half hour. Limiteds would make the trip in one hour and twenty minutes and locals in one hour and fifty minutes.

May 18, 1915, was announced as opening day for the Grand Rapids-Kalamazoo division of the Michigan Railway Company electric line. A special invitation trip was given the mayor, the council, and city officials, as well as several prominent business men on May 11. The party left Kalamazoo in time to arrive in Grand Rapids shortly before 12:00 o'clock for a luncheon.

The officials of Grand Rapids rode to Kalamazoo on the first trip and accompanied the Kalamazoo party on the return trip. Midway between the two cities, the car was halted. Then Mayors George Ellis and James B. Balch of the two cities drove the last spike, declaring the link between their cities completed. President Crowell said that his aim in this ceremony was not only to explain his system and its equipment, but he also hoped to build up a feeling of fellowship and cordiality between the cities and his company's administration.

The main line was now ready for service. At the same time it was announced that cars on the Monteith Junction to Battle Creek spur would run local for the twenty-one miles from Monteith to Gull Lake, then transfer to the Michigan United Traction line to Battle Creek. This would be a temporary arrangement until the new Gull Lake detour was completed.

This detour had been started in 1913 and was to leave the old steam right of way at about the point where the Michigan United Traction and this line separated. It would be a new line to Bay View on Gull Lake. Then it would continue westerly meeting the old steam line again east of the lake. When completed, the old

Michigan United Traction Gull Lake branch would be discontinued. The line was completed on January 2, 1916, and the old line was then abandoned.

On May 17, 1915, service was inaugurated over the new interurban line. Picturesque time tables, bearing the motto—"Safety Always," were distributed among the patrons. Service began at 5:10 A.M. when the first large car slid noiselessly from the station on North Rose Street enroute to Grand Rapids. Few passengers were carried the first trip, but as the day wore on the cars glided out of the city comfortably loaded. Traveling men were much in evidence, pointing to the fact that the new line would be a popular route to the north. With the beginning of service the Michigan United Traction depot on Portage Street was closed permanently. All east bound cars over that line would now leave from the new union terminal. Thirty-four cars were to leave daily for the north and east.

Limiteds and flyers were of the finest appointment. They were of the side entrance type, a feature adopted to provide privacy for the parlor observation compartment. This occupied the rear of the car and required the payment of an extra twenty-five cent fare for the privilege of riding there.

In addition to this section, there was a regular passenger compartment and a smoking section. These two sections were divided by a men's and women's washroom on either side of the aisle. Forward was a large baggage compartment in which the controls were located. Each car had a seating capacity of eighty-five passengers.

The 1915 issue of the *Michigan Investor* gave high praise to the new line and its service. The Fruit Belt line was now to be electrified and also extended west to Dowagiac to connect with the recently completed line from that city to Benton Harbor.

Passenger and freight service was soon beyond the expectations of the officials. Frequent service at convenient hours had made possible this remarkable showing, said the officials. "There is no truth in the theory that the local option measures in effect south of Grand Rapids are responsible for the heavy traffic." "The last argument against this theory," said one of the officials, "is the fact that we have experienced no difficulty with drunken passengers as yet."

Because of the steady increase in business the management decided to extend the line south. It would pass through Vicksburg, Mendon, Centerville, Three Rivers, Constantine, White Pigeon, and then to Elkhart. By this time 7,500 miles of interurban track, the equivalent of two lines from New York to San Francisco, extended through Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana, with a few hundred miles in Wisconsin. Ohio had the most mileage, 2,780 miles; Indiana was next with 1,798; Illinois had 1,590 miles; and Michigan 1,027 miles.²¹ It was possible to travel from New York state to Chicago by electric railroad with only that portion between Kalamazoo and Dowagiac requiring passage by steam line. It was on the short trips between cities that the electric line made serious inroads into the steam railroad business. It offered convenient service from the urban to the well located downtown depots, with frequent schedules.

The very thing the interurban helped to develop, served to destroy it. People grew to expect to go to town when they wanted to, not once or twice a month, as they had done before the beginning of the interurban. People began to move into the country and early developments were always close to the traction line. Then they began to look around for means to travel more independently than even the frequent interurban service could offer. The automobile became the answer, and as the traction had made serious inroads into the steam railroads, now the automobile began to cut into the electric railway passenger business.

By May 31, 1916, the lease of the Kalamazoo, Lake Shore and Chicago Railroad Company, or Fruit Belt Line, to the Michigan United Traction expired and the line passed back to the original owners. The Michigan Electric Railway Company operators of the Michigan United Traction and the Michigan Railway Company properties, since their receivership in 1923, began the operation of motor buses along their own routes. Soon the management discovered that in such operation, they could offer service cheaper than over their own electric lines. Maintenance began to suffer

²¹Due, "The Rise and Decline of the Midwest Interurban," in *Railroad Magazine*.

and as these right of ways grew rougher, passengers turned to the buses, whose riding qualities were constantly growing better as roads and equipment improved.

In 1928 the electric lines could no longer meet the continuing competition of the automobile and their own buses and show any degree of profit. Total gross earnings were \$116,814; operating expenses were \$121,331 before taxes of \$4,818 were paid, making a deficit of more than \$10,000. At midnight, June 1, 1929, all service was abandoned.

Within a period of thirty years a vast railway empire rose and fell. A victim of the very Frankenstein it helped to create: the desire to travel, cheaper, and without long waiting periods; the interurban lost out to the automobile.

Today victims of "Railroada Psychasthenia" in Kalamazoo County, can still see many evidences of these electric lines. The highway between Kalamazoo and Parchment from Mt. Olivet to Mossel Avenue is built on the old right of way of the Kalamazoo to Grand Rapids line. The bridge at Mossel Avenue was originally built over this line. The new highway M-89 between Richland and Gull Lake is built on the right of way of the Battle Creek-Monteith section of this electric system. The portion between Richland and Hooper is still in service as a freight line of the Michigan Central Railroad.

The steam railroads are as rapidly as possible electrifying their systems by means of the diesel-electric locomotive. The Budd Manufacturing Company has brought out a single-unit passenger diesel car for the railroads. It features many of the former advantages of the interurban. With our rapidly saturating highway system, we may find history once again repeating itself and we may again travel between cities by this earlier means of transportation.

Writing Michigan History

F. Clever Bald

TEN GENERAL HISTORIES OF MICHIGAN have been published. The first appeared in 1839; the latest in 1955.¹ Four were put out by companies which sold pre-publication subscriptions and printed volumes of biographies to accompany the history; three were given financial support by state agencies; two were issued by commercial publishers; and one was published by a company organized for that purpose.

Seven are in a single volume. *Michigan as a Province, Territory and State*, by Henry M. Utley and Byron M. Cutcheon is a four volume work; George N. Fuller's *Centennial History* and Willis F. Dunbar's *Michigan through the Centuries* fill two volumes. The last two were put out by the Lewis Publishing Company and were accompanied by three volumes of biographies, as was Charles Moore's single volume, also published by Lewis. The history in each of these so-called "mugbooks" is well written, and it is unfortunate that they are not available in a trade edition.

By occupation, the authors of the ten histories were lawyers, state supreme court judges, professors of history, professional historians, a newspaper editor, and a librarian. All of them were busy men, taking time from whatever leisure they might otherwise have enjoyed to write a book. Most of them were probably aware that

¹James H. Lanman, *History of Michigan, Civil and Topographical, in a Compendious Form: With a View of the Surrounding Lakes* (New York, 1839); and Lanman, *History of Michigan from its Earliest Colonization to the Present Time* (New York, 1841); Charles R. Tuttle, *General History of the State of Michigan; with Biographical Sketches, Portrait Engravings and Numerous Illustrations* (Detroit, 1873); James V. Campbell, *Outlines of the Political History of Michigan* (Detroit, 1876); Thomas M. Cooley, *Michigan, A History of Governments* (Boston, 1885); Henry M. Utley and Byron M. Cutcheon, *Michigan as a Province, Territory and State* (New York, 1906), 4 vols.; Charles Moore, *History of Michigan* (Chicago, 1915), 4 vols. (Volumes 2-4 are biographical); George N. Fuller, *Michigan: A Centennial History of the State and its People* (Chicago, 1939), 5 vols. (Volumes 3-5 are biographical); Milo Quaife and Sidney Glazer, *Michigan: From Primitive Wilderness to Industrial Commonwealth* (New York, 1948); F. Clever Bald, *Michigan in Four Centuries* (New York, 1954); Willis F. Dunbar, *Michigan Through the Centuries* (Chicago, 1955), 4 vols. (Volumes 3-4 are biographical).

their recompense would not be lucrative. James H. Lanman, whose history was published in 1839, wrote: "It is a well known fact that the profits of a local History are generally small . . . the painstaking labor, which has yielded little to leisure or amusement . . . the consultation of all the sources of information whence facts might be derived . . . time snatched from the ordinary hours of sleep, and the necessary duties of a profession, all [were] devoted within the last year to the accomplishment of this work Book making at its best is a barren occupation . . . I entered on this field not for the purpose of speculation but from an interest in Michigan, and my largest expectations will be realized if the compensation for my exertion will yield me the common wages of a day laborer."²

All except two of the writers were natives of Michigan or long time residents. Some were distinguished men in their fields. James V. Campbell was for many years a judge in the state supreme court and a professor of law in the University of Michigan. Thomas M. Cooley was a judge in the same court, a professor of law and dean of the University Law School, and author of volumes on jurisprudence which are considered classics. One of the writers, who fortunately is still among us, is the author of almost innumerable books and articles and has long been the acknowledged authority on the history of the Old Northwest — Dr. Milo M. Quaife.

A characteristic of most of the authors is enthusiasm for the state of Michigan. One wrote:

Perhaps the spirit in which the subject is treated may be considered by the less excitable class of readers as too ardent. To that class I would remark that the nature of the subject seems naturally to awaken much of zeal.³

A second author declared that:

The State has been singularly blessed with able and upright men in conspicuous positions. Graft and greed are notable by their absence. The instances of anything at all derogatory in public life have been few and insignificant. Nevertheless, such as there were have been set down. On the other hand, the real leaders and men of affairs have

²Lanman to William Woodbridge, February 18, 1838, in the William Woodbridge Papers in the Burton Historical Collection of the Detroit Public Library.

³Lanman, *History of Michigan, Civil and Topographical*, p. xii.

been inspired by the highest ideals, and have put the State in the lead in all educational, charitable, and humane endeavors.⁴

A third asserted that:

Michigan's splendid history bears in upon us the fact that Michigan is more than a place, more than the occupations of its people. It is the habit of achievement, a symbol of the realization of high ideals, a symbol of material dependability and of spiritual satisfaction in the higher values of living. If hardship, misfortune and evil have sometimes appeared, yet the forces of courage and truth have usually triumphed. It is an inspiring story that we shall try to tell.⁵

The enthusiasm of some Michigan historians can be matched by quotations from historians of other states of the Old Northwest. One wrote:

In one particular the writer upon Ohio suffers from an embarrassment of riches. The Buckeye state has been so fertile in great men (and let it not go unsaid—in great women also) that the names may not be catalogued without undue extension on the one hand and an inevitable appearance of brag upon the other.⁶

Another quoted, "In place of an Introduction" to his book, an address from which is taken the following sentences:

The brilliant destiny of Illinois is now fairly beginning to unfold, and to be read in the speed with which she is bounding forward upon the highway to prosperity and greatness. Earth holds not, upon all its broad surface, a more fertile and favored land than this our own beautiful Prairie State.⁷

Because there is not time to consider each of the ten histories of Michigan, I shall give you a detailed account of why and how three of them were written.

The first general history of Michigan was written by James H. Lanman. A native of Connecticut, he was a graduate of Trinity College and Harvard Law School. Lanman practiced law in Connecticut and in Maryland, and contributed articles to the *North American Review* and other publications.⁸

In 1837 Lanman visited his brother, who was living in Monroe, Michigan. Becoming interested in the new state, he decided to

⁴Utley and Cutcheon, *Michigan as a Province, Territory and State*, 4:8.

⁵Fuller, *Michigan: A Centennial History of the State and Its People*, 1:iii.

⁶Alexander Black, *The Story of Ohio*, Preface, 2 (Boston, 1888).

⁷Fred Gerhard, *Illinois as It Is*, 11 (Chicago, 1857).

⁸Charles Lanman, *The Red Book of Michigan*, 458 (Detroit, 1871).

write a history. Encouraged by a legislative appropriation to purchase three hundred copies of the book if it was published before May 1, 1839, Lanman hastened to complete the work. The necessity of meeting the deadline, the author explained in the preface, gave him insufficient time to make corrections.⁹

In February, 1839, Lanman wrote an interesting letter to a relative.

I am now in New York, the work has been printed and will be out in about two weeks. It will be splendid in appearance. It is probable that I shall settle down here in my profession. Bright beams seem to light up the horizon. I drew on my publisher Mr. French for fifty dollars. He accepted my draft. It is probable that I shall deliver a lecture before the New York Historical Society, and I next go to work at the law. The map of my work has been engraved at Philadelphia. All the publishers here wanted to get it. The Harpers offered me to publish it and give me twenty-five percent. If I once get in the way of money making of which there is a fair prospect, we will have fine times yet.¹⁰

As the pioneer in the field, Lanman found only a few printed sources of information, and he had access to few manuscript materials. Among the works which he cited were those of Fr. Louis Hennepin, Baron de Lahontan, Fr. Pierre Charlevoix, Alexander Henry, John Carver, Robert Rogers, and Henry R. Schoolcraft.¹¹ Lanman used also the *American State Papers*, court records, and documents of the legislature. He mentioned as especially useful to him the lectures delivered before the Historical Society of Michigan, 1830-34, by Lewis Cass, Schoolcraft, Henry Whiting, and John Biddle, dealing with the history of the state.¹²

Lanman followed Carver and Cass in making Chief Pontiac the sole instigator of the Indian uprising of 1763. That was undoubtedly the tradition at Detroit, and Francis Parkman, who acknowledged the assistance of Cass in providing materials for him, in his *Conspiracy of Pontiac* used this thesis as the basis of his work.

The different reactions of Lanman and Parkman to a manuscript

⁹Lanman, *History of Michigan, Civil and Topographical*, p. ix.

¹⁰James H. Lanman to Josiah Harmar, New York, February 18, 1839, in the Josiah Harmar Papers in the Clements Library at the University of Michigan.

¹¹Lanman, *History of Michigan, Civil and Topographical*, p. v.

¹²Published as *Historical and Scientific Sketches of Michigan* (Detroit, 1834).

journal of the siege of Detroit are interesting. This document is believed to have been written by Robert Navarre, an inhabitant of Detroit. Lanman examined it and reported that it was "discolored by time, garbled and unsatisfactory; amplifying on unimportant details and exhibiting no connected chain of prominent facts."¹³ He apparently made no use of it.

Parkman, on the other hand, studied a copy of the document sent to him by Lewis Cass and stated:

As a literary composition it is quite worthless, being very diffuse and encumbered with dull and trivial details; yet this very minuteness affords strong internal evidence of its authenticity. Its general exactness with respect to facts is fully proved by comparing it with contemporary documents.¹⁴

Parkman cited it frequently as the Pontiac manuscript.

Lanman's *History of Michigan* fills 248 pages. An additional 149 pages are used to provide information about geology, topography, population, and the counties of the state. This material is similar to much in a gazetteer of Michigan, published also in 1839 with legislative encouragement. The author was John Blois. Although there may have been some collaboration between the two, there is no evidence of plagiarism.

There are of course some errors of fact in the book. For example, Lanman states that the posts of Mackinaw and Detroit were evacuated after the wells of the latter station had been filled with stones, the windows broken, the gates of the fort locked, and the keys deposited with an aged negro, in whose possession they were afterwards found.¹⁵ This was probably a local tradition, although Cass did not mention it in his lecture. The next two historians of Michigan repeated Lanman's statement. The true story of the courteous withdrawal of the British garrison and the occupation by American troops was first told by Charles Moore, whose history was published in 1915. He got his facts from contemporary accounts of the transaction.¹⁶

Lanman also wrote a brief and garbled story of the Battle of Lake Erie, September 10, 1813, giving credit for the victory to

¹³Lanman, *History of Michigan, Civil and Topographical*, 124, n.

¹⁴Francis Parkman, *The Conspiracy of Pontiac*, 2:329 (Boston, 1899).

¹⁵Lanman, *History of Michigan, Civil and Topographical*, 167.

¹⁶Moore, *History of Michigan*, 1:255.

Captain Jesse D. Elliott instead of to Captain Oliver Hazard Perry. As the source of his information he named Captain H. B. Brevoort, a resident of Detroit who had won Perry's commendation for his service in the battle.¹⁷

In spite of errors and lack of balance in the book, Lanman's history was a creditable production. The author, however, was not satisfied with it. On January 15, 1840, he wrote from New York to William Woodbridge, who had just become governor of Michigan. Explaining that he had been too hurried to do a thorough job of research and writing, having been able to devote only nine months to the task, he asserted that he now wanted to prepare a more accurate history. In order that he might have an income to support him in Michigan, where he would be close to official records, he asked the Governor to appoint him secretary of state.¹⁸

When Lanman did not receive the appointment, he applied to Harper & Brothers who had earlier expressed an interest in the book. In 1841 they published it in pocket size as a volume in their Family Library, under the title *History of Michigan from its Earliest Colonization to the Present Time*. The text was rewritten and greatly condensed in parts, and the materials which were more suitable for a gazetteer than a history were omitted. Subsequent editions are dated 1842, 1843, 1845, 1855, and 1859. This was a remarkable record for Lanman's book.

The most distinguished author of a history of Michigan was Thomas McIntyre Cooley. A native of New York state, he moved to Adrian, Michigan, when he was nineteen years old. Three years later, in 1846, he was admitted to the bar. In 1857 he was appointed compiler of the statutes of Michigan, and the next year he was named reporter of the State Supreme Court.¹⁹

When the law school of the University of Michigan opened in 1859, Cooley was one of the three professors, and in 1864 he was elected to the bench of the State Supreme Court. In spite of the double burden of academic and judicial duties, Judge Cooley found time to write. His first book, *A Treatise on the Constitutional*

¹⁷Lanman, *History of Michigan, Civil and Topographical*, 213, n.

¹⁸In the Silas Farmer Papers in the Burton Historical Collection of the Detroit Public Library.

¹⁹Earl D. Babst and Lewis G. Vander Velde, *Michigan and the Cleveland Era*, 76 (Ann Arbor, 1948).

Limitations Which Rest Upon the Legislatures of the Several States, published in 1868, gave Cooley a national reputation.²⁰ Other volumes from his pen increased his stature as an authority on jurisprudence: *A Treatise on the Law of Taxation* (1878), *A Treatise on the Law of Torts* (1879), and *The General Principles of Constitutional Law in the United States of America* (1880). Cooley also wrote numerous nontechnical articles for periodicals such as *The North American Review* and *The Atlantic Monthly*.

Cooley's reputation as a master of constitutional law and his ability to write with unusual clarity and conciseness were undoubtedly responsible for his being invited to write a history of Michigan. His diary contains the following entry for April 26, 1884:

Found on my table this morning a letter from Dr. Horace E. Scudder requesting me to write the history of Michigan in his series of "American Commonwealths" now being published by Houghton Mifflin Company.²¹

After that date the diary contains much interesting information about this subject.

The next day Cooley took a walk with his good friend Dr. James B. Angell, president of the University of Michigan, and they discussed the proposal. Cooley wrote:

Mr. Scudder's plan does not embrace all of the states, and at first did not include Michigan. In his letter he says, "It has occurred to me lately, however, that it would be well to select one state for consideration with a view to an analysis of the relation of state and federal government, and that this could well be done through the concrete example of Michigan history. I do not mean that we should have a purely legal discussion, but that it would be desirable somewhere in the series to show how the formal theory of the relations between state and union, as implied in the Constitution and other early instruments has gradually and of late rapidly been undergoing a practical change, so that a view now taken of actual legislation would show how far we had drifted from the original notion of divided powers and rights." President Angell said he did not quite understand why Michigan rather than any other state was selected for this purpose and was inclined to think the plan had more reference to the man selected to write than to the state.²²

²⁰Babst and Vander Velde, *Michigan and the Cleveland Era*, 78-81.

²¹Thomas M. Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1881-1884, in the Michigan Historical Collections of the University of Michigan.

²²Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1881-1884, April 27, 1884.

In the evening Cooley wrote to Scudder saying that he was very busy but that he might be disposed to comply with his request if he could be allowed time enough.²³

Cooley also consulted one of his colleagues on the faculty of the law school, Charles I. Walker, because "he had given a great deal of attention to early Michigan history." Walker replied: "I think most decidedly that you had better undertake the work. I think it can be made of great value and interest."²⁴ When Scudder gave Cooley eighteen months in which to write the book, he decided to do it.²⁵ Meanwhile he had visited Silas Farmer in Detroit and talked with him about his history of the city which was then in press.²⁶

Judge Cooley was for a time unhappy that he had accepted Dr. Scudder's invitation. After a day spent in reading he wrote:

It is curious how little there is pertaining to the history of this region that is not a repetition of something else. Parkman is about the only writer who had made any original investigations, and his books are all of the highest interest and can be relied upon with undoubting confidence.²⁷

A little later he was almost in despair: "I find this the most difficult task I have ever undertaken. I am quite certain I am less qualified for it than for almost any other."²⁸ Then came the dawn known to many another author who has been floundering in darkness. Ten days later he wrote: "I am just beginning to get into the spirit of my undertaking, and now write with considerable facility."²⁹

During the fall, Cooley continued to work on the history. He was also sitting as a judge of the supreme court, writing opinions on cases, and writing articles which the editor of the *North American Review* had requested. Besides, he was serving as an arbitrator in railroad rate disputes. He was, however, free of teaching duties, for at the end of the spring term, 1884, he had resigned from the law school faculty of the University of Michigan. A year later

²³Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1881-1884, April 27, 1884.

²⁴Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1881-1884, April 30, 1884.

²⁵Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1881-1884, May 1, 12, 1884.

²⁶Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1881-1884, May 9, 1884.

²⁷Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1881-1884, July 18, 1884.

²⁸Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1881-1884, August 4, 1884.

²⁹Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1881-1884, August 14, 1884.

he became dean of the school of political science and professor of American history and constitutional law.³⁰

To gather materials not to be found in books, Cooley used several sources. On at least two occasions he consulted his fellow-townsmen, Alpheus Felch, who had been a state representative, 1835-37, a state bank commissioner during the "wild cat" period, auditor general of Michigan, judge of the state supreme court, regent of the University of Michigan, United States Senator, and a professor of law in the university. Felch's recollections may have been supplemented by his correspondence, much of which is now in the Historical Collections of the University of Michigan.³¹ Cooley also visited Detroit several times to read original documents in the hands of Charles I. Walker and the files of the *Detroit Gazette*, 1817-1830. Once, his son Charlie accompanied him to take notes.³²

While busily engaged in writing and other pursuits, Cooley received a copy of Silas Farmer's *History of Detroit*: "A large book for which I pay ten dollars. A great mass of historical material is collected in it and thrown together in a way to make it as uninteresting as possible."³³ Cooley's comment is somewhat harsh, although the book, organized by topics, contains a great quantity of minute details and presents a rather forbidding aspect. Nevertheless, it has been the source for most of the later writers on early Detroit.

During February, 1885, Cooley completed the history. On the twenty-second he read a chapter to President Angell, and five days later he sent the whole manuscript to Charles I. Walker at his request. Walker returned it "with words of commendation."³⁴

The publisher had set 300 pages as the maximum. Cooley estimated that he had enough for 340 pages; and so he spent several days reducing the number of words.³⁵ As a matter of fact, the book contains 371 pages of text. On March 10, ten months after

³⁰Babst and Vander Velde, *Michigan and the Cleveland Era*, 92-93.

³¹Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1881-1884, May 14, September 5, 1884.

³²Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1879-1894, February 7, 11, 12, 1885.

³³Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1881-1884, December 13, 1884.

³⁴Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1879-1894, February 16, 19, 20, 22, 27, March 7, 1885.

³⁵Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1879-1894, March 7, 9, 1885.

having agreed to write the history, Cooley sent off his manuscript by express. On the twenty-sixth he received a letter from Boston and commented: "Mr. Scudder writes me that he is gratified with my 'Michigan' and will put it into the printer's hands at once."³⁶

Cooley wrote in a placid, straightforward style. A master of exposition, he dealt clearly with cause and effect. His narrative flowed smoothly. Without obvious attempts to be literary, he gave to his writing a literary quality by clarity of expression and apt choice of words.

Cooley's book has the subtitle, *A History of Governments*. It is that primarily, but it contains also a considerable amount of social and economic material. There is a chapter on education, and three chapters deal with the Panic of 1837, wild cat banks, the internal improvements program, and the subsequent return to a sound economy.

The author did not try to carry the story up to the date of writing. After a chapter on the slavery problem and the Civil War, he concluded with one entitled, "The New State and the Union." This was obviously intended to satisfy Scudder's suggestion that he show the changed relationship of states and nation.

In this chapter Cooley explains how the strength and the prestige of the nation increased at the expense of the states as a result of the Civil War. Although he maintains a judicial calm, he is obviously not pleased by the new situation. The discussion is largely in general terms. The author finally relates Michigan to the subject by observing that as a rising industrial state, its business men favor a protective tariff and look to the national government for benefits.

Proof sheets began reaching Ann Arbor on April 18, and continued through May and June. Cooley made the index and mailed it on July 18. On August 8 he received an advance copy from the publisher. It was apparently with some trepidation that he anticipated the reception his brain child might receive. In his diary he wrote: "I confess to not feeling proud of it, but I hope the public will receive it with some degree of indulgence."³⁷ By careful scrutiny Cooley discovered one error in the text, "The misplacing of a

³⁶Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1879-1894, March 26, 1885.

³⁷Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1879-1894, August 8, 1885.

letter in one word." In the index he found three errors. He had not read proof on the index, and he attributed the mistakes to a misreading of the manuscript. The four typographical errors irritated Cooley, who was a perfectionist.³⁸

The author's doubts about the reception of the book were soon resolved. He distributed some copies, and soon began to receive flattering acknowledgments. Former Governor Austin Blair wrote: "It is delightfully written and fills its place in the series most acceptably."³⁹ From his colleague on the supreme court bench and on the law school faculty, James V. Campbell, who also had published a history of Michigan, came an enthusiastic letter. As Cooley entered it in his diary: "on receiving my book he laid aside everything else and read it through; he is delighted with it; he expected a good book but this is graphic and spirited beyond expectation, etc."⁴⁰

Charles I. Walker added his praise, and the librarian of the military academy at West Point wrote a very laudatory letter. Cooley quoted him as expressing the opinion that "It will be at once, as it deserves to be, a standard history of Michigan. . . ."⁴¹ The publishers forwarded a letter by Justin Winsor, then engaged in editing the *Narrative and Critical History of America*. Of the book he wrote: "I have read nearly all of it and have been struck with the sense of the narrative and the skillful grouping of events. With the period previous to its admission to the Union, I am perhaps familiar enough with the story to detect error, and I have found none, though possibly some question might be raised on points of opinion."⁴²

Under date of March 10, 1886, Cooley pasted in his diary a clipping which reads as follows:

Other States cover only special lines, as it were of Political history; Michigan seems to have covered the whole, and hence furnishes an

³⁸Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1879-1894, August 20, 1885; Cooley to Houghton Mifflin Company, August 15, 1885, in the Cooley Papers in the Michigan Historical Collections of the University of Michigan.

³⁹Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1879-1894, August 20, 1885; Blair to Cooley, August 19, 1885, in the Cooley Papers.

⁴⁰Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1879-1894, August 25, 1885.

⁴¹Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1879-1894, August 21; Blair to Cooley, September 5, 1885, in the Cooley Papers.

⁴²Winsor to Houghton Mifflin Company, September 17, 1885, in the Cooley Papers.

admirable field for a history of governments. More fortunate still, she has in Judge Cooley a man of great and acknowledged ability, learning, and authority upon all such themes. The result of his labors in this wide field is not only an admirable state history in sufficient detail for the general reader, but a book of remarkable excellence on various phases of government, and of social, political, and constitutional questions, as they have come up in this country. . . . From its distinguished author, but even more from its profoundly valuable subject matter, this is a work to repay abundantly the diligent study of all our citizens.

Cooley explained: "Houghton, Mifflin & Company send the [above] following from the Literary World, marked, evidently thinking I would be particularly pleased with it. But I soon grow tired of my literary work when it is once off my hands, and do not as a rule read what is said about it."⁴³

If Cooley, as he asserted, cared little for the praise which his book received, he was pleased by a more substantial evidence of the favorable reception. On February 1, 1886, he received from Houghton Mifflin Company a statement that \$155.25 in royalties was due him. In his diary he wrote: "This is much more than I was looking for."⁴⁴ The book was so popular that seven editions were published, the last in 1905.⁴⁵

The third history that I am going to tell you about is *Michigan in Four Centuries*. The story begins on a day in July, 1950. Dr. Lewis Beeson, executive secretary of the Michigan Historical Commission, called me by telephone and asked if I had read the newspaper story that the late Dr. John M. Munson of Ypsilanti had bequeathed more than \$100,000 to the Commission. I replied that I had, and that I believed the figure must be wrong. He, too, was skeptical. To make sure, he asked me to go to the Washtenaw County Courthouse in Ann Arbor, read the will, and report to him. I read the will and discovered that the newspaper story was essentially correct.

After some bequests had been paid to relatives, the residue of the estate was to be designated "The John M. Munson Michigan History Fund," with the Ann Arbor Trust Company as trustee. Both principal and income of the fund were to be made available

⁴³Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1879-1894.

⁴⁴Cooley, Personal Memoranda, 1879-1894.

⁴⁵Houghton, Mifflin records show that there were fifteen printings with a total of 6,013 copies. Priscilla C. Smith to the writer, February 7, 1958.

as needed to the Michigan Historical Commission for the writing and publishing of two books. Dr. Munson stated plainly his reason for establishing the fund.

I consider it important that the citizens of Michigan have adequate and correct knowledge of the history and functions of the State of Michigan and its institutions and that this should be taught to the young people in its schools and colleges.⁴⁶

One of the books was to be "a history suitable for the elementary and high schools, giving the basic facts and the development of the state of Michigan to its present status."⁴⁷ The other would be "a history suitable for teacher educating institutions, devoted to the history of education in the state of Michigan, outlining clearly the constitutional and legal basis upon which the structure of public education rests, as well as a clear and thorough account of the organization and operation of the whole system of public education of the state."⁴⁸

Dr. Munson directed in his will that a copy of the first book should be furnished "to each school district, county, and city library," and that a number of copies of the second be placed in the library of each teacher-training college in the state. The distribution was to be "subject to the judgment of the Michigan State Historical Commission."⁴⁹ The will further provided that unless the Commission within three years after Dr. Munson's death had made arrangements to have the first book written, the estate should be conveyed to the general fund of the state of Michigan.

If those of us who were surprised by the bequest had known Dr. Munson, perhaps we should have expected it. Years before his death he had expressed his interest in young people and the history of Michigan. An article that he wrote, entitled "Why Michigan is Great," was published in 1915, and he had it reissued in pamphlet form. It was printed again in 1929 in the *Michigan History* magazine under the title, "To the Boys and Girls of Michigan." The article was inspirational. In it Dr. Munson expressed his pride in Michigan and his gratitude for the great opportunities

⁴⁶Last will and testament of John M. Munson, Ypsilanti, dated October 13, 1949. Probate Courts Records, Washtenaw County Building, Ann Arbor.

⁴⁷Will of John M. Munson dated October 13, 1949.

⁴⁸Will of John M. Munson dated October 13, 1949.

⁴⁹Will of John M. Munson dated October 13, 1949.

the state had given him. The fact is that he had worked hard, preparing himself to take advantage of opportunities as they arose.

John Munson, son of a poor Swedish immigrant, was born in Pennsylvania in 1878. After his mother died when he was twelve years old, he came to Menominee, where he worked in lumber camps and mills. Studying when he could, he passed the examination for a county teacher's certificate in 1905 and taught in Menominee County rural schools. Afterwards he attended Ferris Institute in Big Rapids, and the State Normal School in Ypsilanti. In 1911 he was awarded a bachelor's degree by the University of Chicago.

Dr. Munson's career in Michigan included positions of superintendent of schools, deputy superintendent of public instruction for the state, president of Northern State Teachers College in Marquette, and of Michigan State Normal College in Ypsilanti. He held this last position until his retirement in 1948.⁵⁰

The Michigan Historical Commission asked me to write the general history of the state, and I signed a contract to complete a manuscript of not fewer than 100,000 words within two years. In return for a promise by the Commission to pay me for writing, I waived all claim to royalties.⁵¹

Since Dr. Munson's specification of "a history suitable for the elementary and high schools" was impossible to meet, the Commission decided to produce a book of high school level which, it was hoped, would be interesting to general readers.

To make sure that the text would be understandable for high school pupils, the Commission engaged Miss Marcillene Barnes, director of curriculum of the Grand Rapids schools, to read the manuscript and advise the writer. They also engaged Miss Louise Rau, formerly curator of manuscripts in the Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library, because of her knowledge of Michigan history and her experience as an editor, to read the manuscript. Both were very helpful.

Wanting to make the volume attractive and to increase its usefulness, the Commission resolved to include a great number of drawings and photographs. As illustrator they chose Professor Wil-

⁵⁰James B. Edmonson, "John M. Munson," in *Michigan History*, 34:348-50 (December, 1950).

⁵¹Signed copy of the contract in writer's possession, dated March 1, 1951.

liam T. Woodward of Wayne State University. He made the end papers, ten maps, a headpiece for each of the thirty chapters, and twenty-eight drawings of historical scenes.

To Dr. Phillip P. Mason, state archivist, was assigned the task of selecting appropriate photographs. He arranged significant pictures in related groups and wrote captions for them, providing thirty-two pages of pictorial history. Both the drawings and the photographs are important visual aids for understanding Michigan history.

A reviewer to whom the pictures were a special attraction, hailed it as the book bargain of the year at \$4.00. The numerous illustrations and the low price were, of course, made possible by a subsidy from the Munson fund.

Interpreting the will liberally, the Commission gave a copy of the book to every public library and to each school in Michigan, public, private, and parochial. Thus it was made available to elementary teachers who might use it as a source of information, and in the high schools it could be read by both teachers and pupils.

In order to make it useful as collateral reading for high school classes, the Commission published a manual for teachers.⁵² The purpose is to integrate Michigan history with American history so that teachers and pupils alike will appreciate the part their state has played in the making of the nation. By these measures the Commission hoped to fulfill the promise of Dr. Munson's bequest.

In conclusion: the ten histories of Michigan, written with a span of 119 years between the first and the last, vary in length, in format, and in content. One characteristic they have in common — each author tried to present the story of the state fairly and honestly as he saw it.

⁵²John Clementz and Mary F. Noecker, *Teacher's Guide to Michigan History* (Lansing, 1956).

Marker to First Mile of Concrete Road

Carl D. Franks

THIS FIRST MILE OF CONCRETE ROAD built on Woodward Avenue in 1909 played a most important role in my activities as a young civil engineer representing the Universal Portland Cement Company in the state of Indiana. I came here in 1912 with a group of people from Marion County, Indiana, for my first inspection of this mile of road, and from then on for many years, hundreds of officials and interested citizens came to Wayne County to see for themselves the advantages of the concrete road.¹

Michigan's first roads were five military highways constructed by authority of Congress following the War of 1812, when the state was still a territory. The first of these roads extended from Fort Meigs (now Toledo) to Detroit and was completed in 1829. At that time Detroit had a population of fifteen hundred.

All other roads were township roads, or toll roads. They consisted of mud, corduroy, gravel, or planks. The county road system came into being in 1906 following a special election by voters. The first meeting of the Wayne County Road Commission was held October 1, 1906. Henry Ford was a member of this commission.

The good roads development and expansion of the automotive industry, both starting in Wayne County in the early part of the twentieth century, remade America and led to the nation's vast economic growth.

Edward N. Hines, a member, and later for many years chairman of the Wayne County Road Commission, spearheaded the construction of this first mile of concrete road in April, 1909.

The 50th Annual Report of the Wayne County Road Commission in 1956 citing the history of road building in Wayne County, had this to say:

A radical departure from accepted methods, which was to assume more

¹This talk was given at a luncheon in Highland Park on May 20, 1957, on the occasion of the dedication of the official state marker in Palmer Park on Woodward Avenue noting that the first mile of rural concrete highway was laid in 1909 on Woodward Avenue between Six and Seven Mile roads in Wayne County.

and more significance as time passed, and later was to become the basis of all highway construction, not only in Wayne County but throughout the entire world, was the adoption by this board of the use of concrete for paving roads in an effort to find a better and more lasting material than macadam, which until then was considered the best form of construction.

Thus, the first mile of concrete road was built by the board on Woodward Avenue from the northerly line of the village of Highland Park to Seven Mile Road in 1909. When Woodward Avenue was taken over as a county road, it was a gravel toll road from Detroit to Pontiac, varying in width from 35 to 66 feet. The improvement, started in 1909, was completed to Pontiac in 1916.

This concrete road was completed and opened to traffic in June of that year, all of which met with much skepticism and reluctance on the part of others with whom Hines was associated. The cost of the original road was \$13,537.59. It was eighteen feet wide, six and one-half inches thick. It was built in two courses—the base being four inches thick with coarser aggregates and the top being two and one-half inches thick. It was constructed in twenty-five foot sections.

Perhaps Hines little realized at that time that this was the start of the tremendous contribution the state of Michigan, Wayne County, and this first mile of concrete road would make in the development of two great industries—automotive and portland cement—in addition to hundreds of allied industries, and the employment of millions of people. More than that, before this first mile of concrete road gave way to necessary street widening, Ed Hines witnessed the movement for improvement of highways spread through the width and breadth of this nation.

Because this dedication program is part of Michigan Week it also would be desirable to make special note of the state's contribution to the nation's highway progress stemming from this first mile of concrete.

Other firsts credited to the Wayne County Road Commission include in 1915 the first finishing machine which replaced hand labor in smoothing and leveling concrete roadways, the first use of scrapers towed by truck in 1915 to remove snow, and first use of tree plantings in 1918 to beautify county roadways. Wayne

County also was first to paint centerlines on highways in the early 1920's — a practice now almost universally followed.

At this time (1912) there developed a realization on the part of leaders in the automotive industry that future growth and progress would depend not only on the increased sale of cars and trucks, but on adequate streets and highways for them to run on.

Carl G. Fisher, industrialist and builder of the Indianapolis Speedway, who had been associated with the motor industry almost from its beginning, expressed the idea: "A Road Across the United States — Let's Build it Before we are too Old to Enjoy It." The idea that highways were needed existed, but it had been obscured for nearly eighty years by the canal building movement in the 1830's and 1840's, and the railroad building era which followed and which monopolized public attention.

At the beginning of 1912, the community of interest between the automotive vehicle and the improved highway was becoming apparent. The production capacity of motor car manufacturers exceeded the market and as motorists were demanding better roads, the leaders of this industry gave serious consideration to road improvements as a means of stimulating sales.

On July 1, 1913, the Lincoln Highway Association was organized, and the incorporation papers filed at Lansing under Michigan laws stated,

the purpose was to procure the establishment of a continuous, improved highway from the Atlantic to the Pacific, open to lawful traffic of all description, without toll charges, such highway to be known as the Lincoln Highway in memory of Abraham Lincoln.

The headquarters for this association was in the Dime Bank Building in Detroit. The men associated with this enterprise were: Henry B. Joy, Paul R. Deming, Carl G. Fisher, Russell A. Alger, Roy D. Chapin, and many other important people as time passed by. These men were associated with the motor car industry, directly or indirectly, here in Detroit.

After the route of the Lincoln Highway had been selected, there followed an outstanding campaign of education, promotion, and the construction of seedling miles of concrete. The active work of this association continued until 1926.

The educational work of the Lincoln Highway Association stimulated the thinking of civic minded citizens throughout the entire country. In practically every state there were organized and financed good roads associations with the objective of promoting better roads through proper administration, laws, and financing. It was realized that an educated general public was the key to the success of the work of these organizations.

This country owes an eternal debt to these Michigan men who farsightedly and generously founded the Lincoln Highway Association and advanced by a generation the tremendous benefits which would follow improved roads.

The first federal-aid highway act was enacted into law in 1916 by the Congress of the United States. This was the stimulus to many states to provide state highway departments and to lay out a system of primary roads.

Then in 1919, Thomas H. MacDonald was appointed head of the federal road agency. He retired in 1953 after serving for thirty-four years. This man and his work can best be described by quoting Congressman Carl Vinson of Georgia, who said:

In this systematic creation of our federal-aid highway systems, one man has continuously served this Congress and the executive branch of our government as their guide and counselor since 1919. Through his quiet honesty both in engineering and intellectual judgments and in the economical expenditure of great sums of public money, he has earned those immeasurable gratitudes that come to but few public servants. He has earned the respect of all who have counseled with him from our country. He has been honored by many from foreign lands, who have been astonished and heartened by the teamwork which has created our American highway systems.

The 1920's recorded tremendous advancement on the part of the individual states in highway development and construction, the principal effort being made on the primary systems because federal aid was dedicated to and confined to the construction of this system which consisted of approximately seven per cent of the rural highway mileage in a state.

By 1933, this country had a connected system of hard surfaced roads adequate to handle the movement of 23,877,000 automotive vehicles. The transportation industry provided a great contribution to the economic growth and welfare of this nation. There

were 77,249 miles of rural concrete highways and 24,900 miles of concrete city streets in this great system of highways.

Then came the depression, followed by World War II. Suffice it to say, this great system of highways played a most important part in the winning of this war. Because of the war effort, our roads and streets were considered expendable, and no new construction was permitted except under exceptional conditions. To free men and equipment for the war effort, they received the minimum amount of maintenance.

When the clouds of war rolled away, this nation began to take stock of its highways. They were found to be inadequate to provide the traffic facilities needed and required by the ever increasing number of automotive vehicles. This was a nation moving on rubber.

Let me give you examples of the needs of our highways following World War II. Congress wanted more exact figures on the status of our highways and requested the Bureau of Public Roads to study and report on all highway needs. Through a cooperative effort with all the states, this work was done during the latter part of 1954 and a report presented to Congress in March of 1955.

This report showed that from 75 to 85 per cent of our main highway systems required major improvements to bring them up to the standards needed by the estimated sixty-five million vehicles using them in 1956. The total requirement for modernizing all roads and streets was one hundred and one billion dollars. This meant that we should be spending for highway construction about twice the present amount.

By congressional enactment, the national system of interstate and defense highways came into being in 1944. This is a system of 41,000 miles of highways designed for commerce and defense, and blankets the entire country.

The interregional highway committee appointed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1941 to investigate the need for a limited system of national highways made its report to the President in January, 1944. The President in turn submitted it to Congress that same month. This report was the basis for congressional action. G. Donald Kennedy, then commissioner of highways of Michigan, was a member of this committee.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower during his first term began to marshal federal leadership in favor of a grand plan for highway improvement, and in 1956 Congress enacted into law the federal-aid highway bill. This act provides 24.8 billion dollars for the interstate system alone, to be matched by the states with ten per cent of the cost or 2.8 billions, to improve the interstate system in a period of thirteen years. And further, this system will be expressways, divided lanes of traffic, and limited access. For the primary urban and secondary systems, Congress appropriated 2.5 billions to cover the next three years to be matched by the states on a 50-50 basis, a total of five billion dollars.

Further, Congress has given every indication that these appropriations will be continued for the primary and secondary systems at least, on the present basis and perhaps some increases.

Projected over thirteen years for the interstate, primary, urban, and secondary roads means an expenditure of approximately fifty billion dollars. A construction project of tremendous magnitude, unparalleled in the world.

It would not be fitting or proper for me to conclude my remarks without paying tribute to another great Michigan highway engineer, Leroy C. Smith. He joined the Wayne County road department in 1917 and recently retired from the office of engineer-manager of this commission. Mr. Smith is a master of engineering and political science. He engineered the great system of Wayne County highways which has contributed so much to highway development in Michigan and this country. His thinking and co-operation with Mayor Albert E. Cobo; Glenn Richards, Director of Public Works; and Chas. Ziegler, Highway Commissioner of Michigan, will give to Detroit a system of expressways as adequate as in any city in this nation.

The reason for this brief, historical recitation of men and events in highway development is that here in Wayne County on Woodward Avenue was the humble beginning. It is fitting and proper that we meet here today to pay tribute and honor to the memory of a man and a mile of concrete road. The two together made a great contribution to highway construction and to the economic welfare of a great nation.

The Pontiac Conspiracy in the Novel

1833-1954

Albert Black

AN EARLY NOVEL to appear as a graphic description of Indian warfare in the time of Pontiac is Major John Richardson's *Wacousta, a Tale of the Pontiac Conspiracy*. Published in 1833, reissued in 1851 and 1906, the novel recalls the extent of Pontiac's activities in the Detroit area and characterizes the talent of this extraordinary chief who plotted, schemed, and compromised, but never gave up in the fight to free his people from British rule. Beset with tribal dissatisfaction over the treatment they were receiving from the British, Pontiac also faced the problem of frequent raids by ruffian traders in search of cheap pelts. Pontiac appears in this early novel as a savage, not wholly honorable but extremely clever. Pontiac destroyed the posts at St. Joseph and Michilimackinac, but the attack on Detroit fell short of its objective. The greatness and renown of the Indian chieftain in 1833 is in terms of his wiliness and his ability to lead savages.

More than thirty years were to pass before other novels were to focus on the theme of Pontiac's conspiracy. In 1869, the firm of Beadle and Adams began a series of dime novels based on the myth of Indian life in Michigan. The stories were bloody; they exaggerated known facts; and they presented the Indians as completely non-Christian, savage, and generally brutal. Edward Willett, using the pseudonym J. Stanley Henderson, wrote *The Trader Spy*. With the Detroit River and environs as background, he unfolded a story of Pontiac and the reasons behind Pontiac's inability to surprise the garrison at Detroit. It was published as a dime novel, No. 176, in 1869.

Another Beadle and Adams writer used intertribal conflict as a focal point for a dime novel. In *Weptonomah, Hunted Wolf of the Wyandots*, T. C. Harbaugh, writing under the pseudonym of Charles Howard, told of conflict between Chippewa and Wyandotte

Indians on the eastern Michigan Lake trail in the late 1600's. Appearing in 1871 as Starr American novel, it was followed in 1873 by another of his fictional accounts of incidents among Indians, *Silver Rifle, or The White Tigers of Lake Superior*. Appearing as American novel No. 126, this was the story of Indians on the southern shore of Lake Superior in 1763.

Joseph E. Badger, another energetic and prolific writer for the house of Beadle and Adams, turned northward for action, and pictures the fall of Michilimackinac in *Caribou Zip, or The Forest Brothers*, dime novel No. 306, April 21, 1874. An earlier effort, *The Indian Scout*, appeared in 1871 as American novel No. 68, and related the effects of the whiskey trade on Indians of Michigan pre-Revolutionary War days.

Alexander Henry, an English trader, chanced to be at the garrison at Fort Michilimackinac when Chief Minavavana, the Grand Saulteur, baited the trap for the garrison with a game of lacrosse beside the fort. Nondescript squaws entered the fort wrapped in blankets concealing knives and tomahawks. On a signal, the game of lacrosse became an attack on the garrison. Henry hid through the pity of a slave woman, Pani, from the Chippewa until the following morning, when he was discovered and carried away. Wenniway, an Indian prepared to kill him, but changed his mind and adopted him.¹

Within the framework of the historical facts of Alexander Henry's experiences at Michilimackinac, Mary Hartwell Catherwood constructed the *White Islander*, based on Henry's own published narrative of the massacre. The novel serves to introduce a marginal character, white and Indian, into the fiction picture, through the ceremony of becoming blood brothers, "My blood is in his arm and his blood is in my arm. I cannot eat my own blood."² But, importantly, the novel presents a fictional Indian maiden who joins her fate to Henry's as the tribe threatens his life, and saves him.³ The frontier priest, "obliged to make the conditions of religion as easy as they dared for their wild flock", marries the two members of different races.

The Indian heroine as Catherine, reappears in the novel, *Pontiac*,

¹F. Clever Bald, *Michigan in Four Centuries*, 72 (New York, 1954).

²Mary Hartwell Catherwood, *White Islander*, 13 (New York, 1896).

³Catherwood, *White Islander*, 150.

Chief of the Ottawas. In this 1897 publication by Edward S. Ellis, under the pseudonym of H. R. Gordon, the Ojibway maiden, who had saved the fort at Detroit from attack, arranges the return of a white girl who had been spirited away by Pontiac.

A single example of the French hero as a character in fiction with the Pontiac conspiracy as background is Randall Parrish's *Sword of the Old Frontier* (1905). Chevalier Raoul de Coubert has a mission to the Black Lodges of the Ottawas from Fort Chartres. Travel along the Indian trails of lower Michigan to the camp of Pontiac in 1763 involved the French officer in both adventure along the trail and a love affair.

Onawago, Betrayer of Pontiac by Will Cumback Ludlow and *White Captive* by Richard C. Ford are novels which give clear accounts of life in the southern parts of Michigan in 1763. *Onawago*, published in 1911, gives a tale of the feminine savior of Fort Detroit, and is one of many versions. Ford's *White Captive*, published in 1915, is a juvenile of quality and merits attention for the view of conditions in Michigan during the Pontiac threat.

The Indian problem in the 1760's is one of settlement, according to Thomas Boyd, author of *Shadow of the Long Knives*, published by Peter Smith, New York, 1928. The Indians, relinquishing their hunting grounds for the bright cloths and trinkets given them, often found themselves with no other place of settlement. Westward lay other tribes, formidable and resentful of encroachment. Thus they were caught between two fires in 1763, the colonist to the east and stronger tribes to the west. The English scout, Angus McDermott, central figure of *Shadow of the Long Knives*, grew up among Indians in the East and has a sympathetic understanding of their plight. He views the trappers and traders as a scurvy lot for their whiskey trade, but is intent on a course through the wilderness to Detroit with a message for the English Indian agent. Beyond observations of the Indians' condition and completion of the journey, he is interested only in the establishment of a happy home with a wife, aptly named, Charity.

The Michigan episode in Louis Zara's *This Land is Ours* includes Pontiac's unsuccessful attempt to take Detroit by trickery, and it presents Indian deceit in the calumet dance. "The pipe of peace," the braves intoned, 'The Master of Life inhales our smoke and

knows we dance for peace.' " Gladwin guessed, or was informed, of Pontiac's true intent, and in dramatic fashion, according to the novelist, reached over during the council with the chiefs of the Ottawa tribe and yanked the blanket from the nearest brave. A dull-looking gun-barrel, clumsily sawed off at the muzzle, sat in the man's arms. The failure of the Indian trickery led to a prolonged siege of Detroit, and this to unrest among the French habitants many of whom eventually journeyed south and west to settle closer to the Mississippi River.

The wiles of a half-breed who goes to the support of Pontiac is the foundation for Harry Hamilton's *Thunder in the Wilderness* published in 1949, and indicates a growing interest in the plight of the Indian in the late 1700's. This concern for the Indian's side of the conspiracy is highlighted by the appearance of Margaret Cooper Gay's *Hatchet in the Sky* in 1954. David Caithris, a Scot, had turned his back on the continent and aimed to find in that strange, wild land of America adventure, fortune, glory, and freedom. He turned to the fur trade, adopted the English methods of trade, found the colonists to be less lawful than he liked, and came to have a profound respect for the Indian chief, "Pondiac" [*sic*].

Three points of interpretation bear emphasis in regard to the author's conception of character and history. One, the characterization of David Caithris is that of an exile, independent, and bold, who sought freedom in the new land only to find the rulers to be every bit "as bad as ever I imagined them."⁴ Two, the character of the Indian is affirmative, showing the struggle to live "without destruction or building up, to leave the world unmarked by their passage," and giving Pontiac an heroic, noble, savage visage.

He was only middling tall but he had a sort of majesty and the eyes that looked out of his dark face were the color of storm clouds, far-seeing, remote, ruthless, with the look of eagles in them.⁵

Three, the passing of the Indian nations is climaxed in the smallpox epidemic which decimated the wintering Indian population, and gives a pathetic background to appearance of the hatchet-in-the-sky, the sign of war and the symbol of Pontiac's wish to take back the land of his fathers.

⁴Margaret Cooper Gay. *Hatchet in the Sky*, 106 (New York, 1954).

⁵Gay, *Hatchet in the Sky*, 185.

We have only the accounts of white men, who observed Chief Pontiac as one man watches a stranger, to provide the description of the chieftain. Without doubt, in history and in fiction, Pontiac possessed commanding energy and a strong force of mind. In subtlety and craft, he was the best of a wily race, according to the historian Parkman. Though capable of acts of lofty magnanimity, Pontiac remained a thorough savage, howbeit with a wider range of intellect than those around him, but sharing their passions and prejudices, their fierceness and treachery. Yet his faults were the faults of his race and they cannot eclipse his nobler qualities. Major Robert Rogers remarked that Pontiac was greatly honored and revered by his subjects.

The novels depicting Pontiac and the great conspiracy show his alternating moods, and generally as Gay's *Hatchet in the Sky* portray the decline of the confederation. Increasingly, the novelist became interested in the character of the savage leader. Perhaps a novelist will depict the total decline of Pontiac and his conspiracy to show the exile from Detroit in November, 1763, a hunter without a tribe, a chief without a people, a man to whom assassination would come when his power to form nations and conspiracies had waned. The Peoria Indian who killed Pontiac in 1769 brought momentary notice but no reprisals from the encampment of Indians to leave the historian and novelist a final sense of tragedy in the story of the Pontiac Conspiracy.

Michigan News

At the close of 1958 there was a total of 1225 centennial farms registered in the state. Of this number 168 were added during the year. One of the outstanding presentations of the year was in Berrien County at the Brick School in Coloma where twenty-seven certificates and farm markers were presented on June 7, 1958, by Dr. Willis Dunbar, a member of the Michigan Historical Commission. These farms date back to a settlement by German pioneers in what is known as the German Hills.

Michigan farmers who received farm centennial certificates in 1958, together with the township in which they live, their relationship to the original owner, and the date of acquisition of the farm, are as follows:

ALLEGAN COUNTY

Plummer, Mrs. Bertha L. and Aaron. *Ganges*. Granddaughter-in-law and great-grandson. 1846.
Scholten, Gerald and Harvey. *Laketown*. Great-grandsons. 1851.

BARRY COUNTY

Enz, Ford. *Woodland*. Grandson. 1856.
Kiblinger, Mrs. Mary (Dewey). *Johnstown*. Granddaughter. 1854.
Shaw, Mrs. Julia M. *Yankee Springs*. Great-granddaughter. 1837.

BAY COUNTY

DeWyse, Edward and Clara (Vennix). *Merritt*. Niece. 1858.
Hemingway, Jay. *Williams*. Great-grandson. 1857.
Herbolsheimer, Mrs. Dora. *Frankenlust*. Great-granddaughter-in-law. 1854.

BERRIEN COUNTY

Arent, Floyd and Winifred. *Bainbridge*. Great-grandson. 1856.
Butzbach, Clarence and Lila. *Bainbridge*. Grandson. 1858.
Butzbach, Herman. *Bainbridge*. Grandnephew. 1855.
Butzbach, Lyle and Marie. *Bainbridge*. Great-grandnephew. 1855.
Friday, George and Evelyn. *Coloma*. Grandson. 1854.
Friday, James E. and Marianne. *Bainbridge*. Great-grandson. 1854.
Friday, James E. and Marianne. *Bainbridge*. Great-great-grandson. 1855.

Friday, Victor and Marguerite. *Bainbridge*. Great-great-grandson. 1855.

Fruehauf, Jacob, Jr. *Bainbridge*. Grandson. 1855.

Fruehauf, William and Mabel. *Bainbridge*. Grandson. 1855.

Herman, George and Mabel. *Bainbridge*. Grandson. 1856.

Kibler, Charles E. and Marguerite. *Bainbridge*. Great-grandson. 1854.

Kibler, Ernest and Anna. *Bainbridge*. Grandson. 1854.

Kibler, Frank and Minnie. *Bainbridge*. Grandson. 1854.

Kniebes, John P. and Lydia. *Bainbridge*. Great-grandson. 1858.

Kniebes, Reuben and Mae. *Bainbridge*. Grandson. 1846.

Kreitner, Alvin and Helen. *Coloma*. Grandson. 1855.

Krieger, Ray and Evelyn. *Bainbridge*. Grandson. 1857.

Krieger, Wallace and Matilda. *Bainbridge*. Grandson. 1858.

Langer, Mrs. Tony (Ruth). *Royalton*. Granddaughter. 1858.

Lull, Mrs. Louise. *Bainbridge*. Granddaughter. 1854.

Messenger, Eva. *Bertrand*. Granddaughter. 1845.

Randall, Albert M. *Bainbridge*. Great-grandson. 1837.

Scherer, Mrs. Amelia. *Bainbridge*. Daughter-in-law. 1855.

Scherer, Mrs. Emma. *Bainbridge*. Daughter-in-law. 1854.

Snyder, Charles E. *Benton*. Grandson. 1855.

Snyder, Warren and Harriett. *Benton*. Grandson. 1855.

Thomson, Thomas H. *Niles*. Grandson. 1844.

Tice, Niel J. *Pipestone*. Great-grandson. 1849.

Umphrey, Lewis and Mildred. *Bainbridge*. Great-grandnephew. 1858.

Weber, Chester and Virginia (Kniebes). *Bainbridge*. Great-granddaughter. 1846.

Weber, Lena (Miss). *Bainbridge*. Granddaughter. 1858.

Weber, Otto. *Bainbridge*. Grandson. 1858.

BRANCH COUNTY

Farwell, Don, Jr. *Butler*. Grandson. 1850.

Havens, E. Myra Smith. *Girard*. Great-granddaughter. 1833.

Manvel, Mary and Ina. *Union*. Granddaughters. 1856.

Tappenden, Mrs. Rena M. *Girard*. Granddaughter. 1840.

CALHOUN COUNTY

Aldrich, Harold and Georgia. *Tekonsha*. Grandson. 1858.

Aldrich, Russell J. *Tekonsha*. Grandson. 1858.

Benham, Frank and Helen. *Albion*. Great-grandson. 1836.

Good, William A. *Fredonia*. Great-grandson. 1858.

Grover, Mrs. Fern. *LeRoy*. Great-granddaughter. 1837.

Knapp, Charles R. *Clarendon*. Grandson. 1845.

Martin, Marie Howell. *Albion*. Great-granddaughter. 1835.

Oderkirk, Robert E. *Sheridan*. Great-grandson. 1847.
VanSickle, Lorain W. *Marengo*. Great-grandson. 1835.
Weldon, Keith. *Sheridan*. Great-grandson. 1850.
Willitts, Clara Cary. *Fredonia*. Granddaughter. 1852.

CASS COUNTY

Newton, Montell. *Pokagon*. Great-grandson. 1839.
Saunter, Mrs. Beatrice. *Porter*. Great-granddaughter. 1854.

CLINTON COUNTY

Dodge, H. Dean and Opal. *Duplain*. Great-grandson. 1838.
Hills, Eleanor Simpson. *Ovid*. Granddaughter. 1854.

EATON COUNTY

Amspacher, Floyd. *Carmel*. Great-grandson. 1853.
Cole, Harold. *Benton*. Grandson. 1858.
Cole, Robert. *Walton*. Great-grandson. 1857.
Day, Arthur E. *Bellevue*. Grandson. 1836.
Harmon, Ivan. *Kalamo*. Grandson. 1853.
Horn, Mrs. Minnie. *Carmel*. Granddaughter. 1855.
MacDonald, Mrs. Vernon L. *Sunfield*. Great-granddaughter. 1851.
Martin, Ernest R. *Chester*. Son. 1844.
Tanner, Roy. *Carmel*. Grandson. 1837.
Walsh, Thomas Archie. *Benton*. Son. 1856.

GENESEE COUNTY

Belford, Hazel. *Grand Blanc*. Granddaughter. 1850.

GRATIOT COUNTY

Londry, James A. *Lafayette*. Great-grandson. 1858.
Wiles, Lloyd Sr. *New Haven*. Grandson. 1857.

HILLSDALE COUNTY

Abbott, Howard K. *Reading*. Grandson. 1842.
Balcom, Clifford A. *Reading*. Great-grandson. 1843.
Balcom, Clifford and Minnie. *Allen*. Great-grandson. 1849.
Brown, Albert N. *Moscow*. Great-grandson. 1835.
Cole, John and Loraine. *Reading*. Grandson. 1843.
Day, Leo W. *Pittsford*. Great-grandson. 1835.
Galloway, Neil Archer. *Reading*. Great-grandson. 1848.
Riker, Merle, Zerald, and Pauline. *Litchfield*. Great-grandson,
great-great-grandson, and daughter-in-law. 1836.
Voorhees, Mrs. Lida M. *Wheatland*. Granddaughter-in-law. 1854.
Wilson, Mrs. Addie (Robins). *Wheatland*. Great-granddaughter.
1837.

INGHAM COUNTY

Malcho, William H. & John. *White Oak*. Great grandsons. 1837.
Otis, Luella (Jesse). *Stockbridge*. Great-granddaughter. 1848.

IONIA COUNTY

Eddy, Stanley G. *Berlin*. Grandson. 1853.
Olmstead, Mrs. Marguerite. *Orange*. Granddaughter-in-law. 1850.
Rasmussen, John. *Easton*. Great-grandson-in-law. 1837.
Scott, Claud J. *Campbell*. Grandson. 1857.
Weisgerber, Wm. L. *Orange*. Grandson. 1858.

JACKSON COUNTY

Carpenter, Mrs. Lucile. *Napoleon*. Great-granddaughter. 1854.
Charles, Sr., Smith and Sadie. *Columbia*. Grandson. 1844.
Gee, Lloyd M. *Henrietta*. Grandson. 1858.
Gillispie, Leo J. *Concord*. Grandson. 1854.
Luttenton, Beryl & Margaret (Rodgers). *Concord*. Great-great-great-granddaughter. 1849.
Robinson, Edmund and Delia. *Grass Lake*. Grandson. 1852.
Scheele, Sarah Daniels. *Blackman*. Granddaughter. 1838.
Wolf, Mrs. Lena. *Columbia*. Granddaughter. 1853.

KALAMAZOO COUNTY

Ebinger, Bethel (Mrs.). *Climax*. Great-granddaughter. 1851.
Lawrence, Jette (Mrs.). *Climax*. Granddaughter. 1851.

KENT COUNTY

Cordes, Clarence J. *Alpine*. Grandson. 1840.
Darling, Fred S. *Paris*. Grand nephew. 1851.
Drake, Mrs. Charlotte. *Oakfield*. Daughter. 1854.
Eardley, Mrs. Caroline. *Paris*. Granddaughter. 1851.
Harris, Mrs. Eva B. *Oakfield*. Granddaughter. 1845.
Lamoreaux, Wm. S. *Walker*. Grandson. 1844.
MacNaughton, Donald. *Ada*. Great-grandson. 1845.
Marshall, Mrs. Roy. *Byron*. Great-granddaughter-in-law. 1851.
May, James Joseph. *Cascade*. Grandson. 1837.
Richmond, Harry. *Vergennes*. Grandson. 1851.
Steffens, Walter. *Alpine*. Grandson. 1852.
Wells, Ruth Yeiter. *Lowell*. Granddaughter. 1858.

LAPEER COUNTY

Brigham, George H. *Hadley*. Grandson. 1836.
Hoisington, Phyllis (Mrs.). *Attica*. Granddaughter. 1854.
Spencer, Clara J. (Mrs.). *Burlington*. Granddaughter-in-law. 1855.

LENAWEE COUNTY

- Emerson, Reo Middleton. *Dover*. Great-granddaughter. 1840.
Knowles, Alton. *Adrian*. Grandson 1851.
Lawson, Miss Margaret & Miss Katherine. *Deerfield*. Granddaughters.
1854.
McCormick, George E. *Riga*. Son. 1858.
Price, George W. *Ridgeway*. Grandson. 1847.

LIVINGSTON COUNTY

- Balmer, George and Margaret. *Green Oak*. Great-granddaughter.
1855.
Beach, Max and Hazel. *Hartland*. Grandson. 1858.
DeWolf, Mrs. Mary. *Hamburg*. Granddaughter-in-law. 1835.
Lemen, William R. *Hartland*. Grandson. 1850.

MACOMB COUNTY

- Van Agen, Frank. *Erin*. Great-Grandson. 1856.

MECOSTA COUNTY

- Mitchell, James D. *Mecosta*. Son. 1848.

MONTCALM COUNTY

- Comstock, Guy W. *Bushnell*. Son. 1856.
Loree, Maurice Clock and Elizabeth. *Bushnell*. Grandson. 1851.
Whitmore, George and Jessie (Clock). *Bushnell*. Daughter. 1852.

MONROE COUNTY

- Keeney, Wallace. *Erie*. Great-grandson. 1837.

MUSKEGON COUNTY

- Svensson, Johanna Eleanor (Mrs.). *Whitehall*. Granddaughter. 1857.

OAKLAND COUNTY

- Barrett, Earl C. *Highland*. Great-grandson. 1849.
Lyon, Lucius E. W. *Milford & Highland*. Grandson. 1837.

SAGINAW COUNTY

- Meyer, Norman F. *Frankenmuth*. Grandson. 1857.
Munger, Mrs. Edith (Roeser); Gregory, Mrs. Erna (Roeser);
Schroeder, Mrs. Emma (Roeser); Sanford, Mrs. Leila (Roeser).
Tittabawassee. Granddaughters. 1850.
Schmidt, Mable Z. (Shreve). *Taymouth*. Great-granddaughter 1853.
Somers, William and Alena. *Chapin*. Son. 1858.
Wood, Zola M. (Mrs.). *Chapin*. Granddaughter. 1858.

SANILAC COUNTY

- Gardner, Melvin R. *Croswell*. Grandson. 1855.
Merrill, George R. *Lexington*. Great-grandson. 1848.
Myers, Mrs. Mary J. *Bridgehampton*. Granddaughter. 1857.
Schoettle, Everett C. *Lexington*. Grandson. 1856.

SHIAWASSEE COUNTY

- Blake, Guy D. *Antrim*. Great-Great-grandson. 1837.

ST. CLAIR COUNTY

- Meldrum, Edmund and Lorene. *Cottrellville*. Grandson. 1853.
Neddermeyer, John, Jr. *Ira*. Grandson. 1856.
Roberts, Herbert James. *Greenwood*. Grandson. 1852.
Shutt, Richard P. *Mussey*. Grandson. 1851.
Vincent, Dwight. *Greenwood*. Great-grandson. 1857.

ST. JOSEPH COUNTY

- Beebe, Louise P. (Mrs.). *Mendon*. Granddaughter-in-law. 1848.
Hallam, Arthur. *Mendon*. Grandson. 1858.
Howard, Gerald A. *Flowerfield*. Grandson. 1853.
Major, Isaac Walter. *Lockport*. Grandson. 1834.

TUSCOLA COUNTY

- Colling, Elmer. *Columbia*. Great-grandson. 1854.
Kinney, Chester A. *Watertown*. Grandson. 1855.
Kinney, Mrs. Etta. *Watertown*. Granddaughter-in-law. 1855.
Kinney, George. *Watertown*. Grandson. 1855.
O'Neil, Harold M. *Watertown*. Grandson. 1855.
Parish, Kenneth D. and Bernice. *Fairgrove*. Great-grand nephew. 1858.

VAN BUREN COUNTY

- Alexander, Mary, Rush, and Esther. *Porter*. Granddaughter, grandson-in-law, and Great-granddaughter. 1847.
Nesbitt, William J. *Porter*. Grandson. 1846.

WASHTENAW COUNTY

- Harwood, Webb S. *Pittsfield*. Great-grandson. 1835.
Hinderer, Herbert. *Freedom*. Grandson. 1853.
Linden, E. Madonna (Miss). *Bridgewater*. Granddaughter. 1837.
Raab, Mrs. Lydia. *Bridgewater*. Granddaughter-in-law. 1850.
Stein, Benjamin C. *Scio*. Grandson. 1835.
Zeluff, Alan N. *York*. Great-grandson. 1856.

WAYNE COUNTY

- Smith, Clyde E. *Nankin*. Great-grandson. 1836.
Truesdell, Glen. *Canton*. Great-grandson. 1836.

A conference on "Local History Participation" was held November 7 and 8, 1958, at the McGregor Memorial Center on the Wayne State University campus. Over three hundred persons attended the conference, which was sponsored by the Detroit Historical Society, Burton Historical Collection of the Detroit Public Library, and the history department of Wayne State University. The Friday meetings were concerned with the problems of the archivist and the professional historian and included talks by Lewis G. Vander Velde of the University of Michigan on "The Michigan Historical Collections after Twenty Years" and by Henry P. Beers of the National Archives on "French Records on the Old Northwest." A panel discussion, "Michigan Resources on the Civil War," brought out first-hand reports on the activities of the state's leading archives and research collections in collecting and preserving Civil War letters and diaries. Plans were made for a cooperative project to make available to scholars the widely-scattered resources on the Civil War.

Tours of the Wayne State University Archives, the Burton Historical Collection, and the Detroit Historical Museum were enjoyed by many. A refreshment hour and a film, "Mathew Brady and the Civil War," rounded out the Friday meetings.

The Saturday program consisted of meetings on archaeology, genealogy, marine lore, and the Civil War. Of particular interest to all the historical groups was the panel discussion on "Local History Publications." Panelists Lewis Beeson, executive secretary of the Michigan Historical Commission, Harold Basilius, director of Wayne State University Press; William Bostick, editor of the *Midwest Museums Quarterly*, design consultant; and moderator Henry Brown, director of the Detroit Historical Museum, offered many helpful suggestions to editors of local history publications.

The Saturday luncheon featured the presentation of history awards to persons in the Detroit area. Clement Silvestro, executive secretary of the American Association for State and Local History, presented his association's coveted award of merit to Raymond Miller and the Wayne State University Press for the book *Kilowatts at Work: A History of the Detroit Edison Company*. The Michigan Mutual Liability Company received similar honors. The Whittaker history awards went to Cynthia Boyes and Newman Jeffrey for their papers on the history of WWJ and the Detroit Young Men's Society. The

Michigan State Historical Society presented an award of merit to the *Grosse Pointe Press and Northeast Detroiter* for its work in promoting local history.

The luncheon program ended with a brief but fascinating talk on "Local History and Local Archaeology" by Arnold Pilling of the sociology and anthropology department of Wayne State University.

Contributors

Douglas H. Gordon is a graduate of Harvard Law School and holds a doctorate from the University of Maryland. He is a prominent attorney in Baltimore, a former president of St. John's College of Annapolis, Maryland, an authority on French literature, fine books and binding, and a supporter of many cultural institutions in Baltimore. Dr. Gordon's great-grandfather, Basil Gordon, was the brother of John M. Gordon's father, Samuel Gordon.

George S. May is archivist on the staff of the Michigan Historical Commission and has been a frequent contributor to *Michigan History*.

A. Rodney Lenderink is a member of the Central Electric Railfans Association of Chicago, which is a society composed of persons having as a hobby an interest in electric railroads, past and present. He is a native of Kalamazoo. History, with emphasis on local history, was one of his majors at Western Michigan University where he received a B.S. degree in 1937.

Dr. F. Clever Bald is assistant director of the Michigan Historical Collections at the University of Michigan. His *Michigan in Four Centuries* published by Harper & Brothers has sold nearly twenty thousand copies. "Writing Michigan History," was read by Dr. Bald at the American Association for State and Local History section meeting of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association Convention in Minneapolis, April 26, 1958.

Carl D. Franks is a retired former president of the Portland Cement Association, and a veteran of the fight for better roads in America. He was born in Kendallville, Indiana, and received the B.S. degree from Purdue University.

Albert G. Black is a teacher in the department of English at the University of Michigan. In the September 1957 issue of *Michigan History* was noted his compilation of a *Checklist of Michigan Novels* which reflect the historical and literary development of Michigan's history and heritage.

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EMERSON SMITH, St. Ignace, 1958-61
ROGER VAN BOLT, FLINT, 1958-61

The Historical Society of Michigan is an organization maintained and managed by Michigan citizens who are interested in the history of their state. It includes teachers, business men, professional people, and others who write history, study history, or just enjoy reading history. Its purpose is to encourage historical research and publication and to foster local historical societies throughout the state. Membership dues to individuals, libraries, and institutions are \$5.00 per year. *Michigan History* is sent to each member.

The Michigan Historical Commission is an official state body, consisting of six members appointed by the Governor. It was first established by an act of the legislature in 1913. The Commission is custodian of the state's archives; it compiles, edits, and publishes Michigan materials; and seeks to cultivate, through the Historical Society of Michigan and other groups, a continuing interest in the history of Michigan from the early times to the present.

Michigan History is a quarterly journal containing articles by qualified writers on Michigan subjects, reviews of books related to Michigan and its past, and news of historical activities in the state. Contributions are invited. Manuscripts should be submitted to the Editor, Michigan Historical Commission, Lansing 13, Michigan.

The Commission maintains at Lansing the Michigan Historical Museum, a rich storehouse of artifacts and documents related to the history of the state.

Among the activities of the Commission and the Society are the following: an annual meeting is held each year in the fall, at which tours and talks on Michiganiana are enjoyed; books and pamphlets are published from time to time; a conference on the teaching of Michigan materials is held annually; historical celebrations are encouraged in various parts of the state; a program of marking historical places is sponsored; guidance is provided to local governmental and state agencies on the destruction of useless records and the preservation of records having historical value.

